



Type: Book

The Allegory of the Olive Tree: The Olive, the Bible, and Jacob 5

Editor(s): Stephen D. Ricks and John W. Welch

Published: Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company; Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1994

Abstract: In the Book of Mormon, the allegory of the olive tree—written by a prophet named Zenos and later quoted by the prophet Jacob to his people—stands out as a unique literary creation worthy of close analysis and greater appreciation. Besides its exceptional length and exquisite detail, this text conveys important teachings, deep emotion, and wisdom related to God’s tender devotion and aspirations for the house of Israel on earth.

In *The Allegory of the Olive Tree*, 20 scholars shed light on the meaning, themes, and rhetorical aspects of the allegory, as well as on its historical, cultural, and religious backgrounds. In so doing, they offer answers to questions about the significance of olive tree symbolism in the ancient Near East, who Zenos was, the meaning of the allegory, what it teaches about the relationship between God and his people, how it might relate to other ancient texts, the accuracy of the horticultural and botanical details in the text, and much more.



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THE ALLEGORY
OF THE OLIVE TREE



A view in the Garden of Gethsemane, literally the "valley of olive oil."
Wood engraving from C.W. Wilson's *Picturesque Palestine* (1883).

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The Olive, the Bible, and Jacob 5

*Edited by
Stephen D. Ricks
and John W. Welch*

Deseret Book Company
Salt Lake City, Utah
and
Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies
Provo, Utah

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

The Allegory of the Olive Tree: The Olive, the Bible, and Jacob 5. / Stephen D. Ricks and John W. Welch.

p. cm.

Papers presented to a conference convened at Brigham Young University on March 17, 1992.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 0-87579 -767-9

1. Olive—Religious aspects—Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—Congresses. 2. Olive—Religious aspects—Congresses.

3. Olive in the Bible—Congresses. 4. Book of Mormon. Book of Jacob V—Criticism, interpretation, etc.—Congresses. I. Ricks, Stephen David. II. Welch, John W. (John Woodland)

BX8643.O44O44 1994

289.3'2—dc20

93-36632

CIP

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3

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Introduction

This book, we believe, is the most comprehensive collection of materials ever published about the olive in the world of the Bible and Book of Mormon. It is the result of more than ten years of research. In the early 1980s, the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies published a call for research on the olive tree and its religious significance in the ancient world. Over the next several years, volunteers began collecting materials, donations were received, interested scholars organized themselves into working groups, findings were shared, and drafts of articles were circulated and critiqued. On March 17, 1992, a full-day conference was convened at Brigham Young University, where the main portions of the papers in this volume were presented to a large audience.

As a result of this research, the allegory of the olive tree, written by Zenos and quoted by Jacob to his people in Jacob 5 in the Book of Mormon (the complete text begins on page 563), strikes us anew as one of the most magnificent allegories in all the sacred literature of the Judeo-Christian tradition. Besides its exceptional length and exquisite detail, Zenos's extended allegory communicates important meaning, deep emotion, rich wisdom, and divine feeling. No other allegorical text encompasses greater historical scope and typological vitality. It deserves an honored place alongside the best biblical parables or symbolic literature.

The articles in this book offer answers to many questions about the olive in religious symbolism:

- Why was the olive such a powerful and pervasive image among the people of the Bible?
- What is the significance of olive oil in sacred anointings, of the symbolism of the Mount of Olives, and of the Garden of Gethsemane (literally, “place of the olive press”)?
- What does Zenos’s allegory mean?
- Who is represented in the allegory?
- What does the allegory tell us about the relationship between God and his people?
- What has the image of the olive tree meant to prophets of the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Book of Mormon, as well as in modern times?
- What significance did the olive have in the religions of Greece, Rome, and in the literature of the ancient Near East?
- What importance did the olive have in the life of people in ancient Palestine, as a source of light, food, and ointment?
- How were good olives grown?
- What is involved in the long-term grafting, pruning, fertilizing, and cultivating of a fully productive olive grove?
- How accurately and significantly are horticultural or botanical details reflected in Zenos’s allegory?
- When the allegory depicts unusual or anomalous circumstances, does it do so for particular dramatic effects?
- What can we learn from a detailed study of the words of Zenos, his vocabulary, and his rhetoric?
- Who was Zenos?
- When did he live?
- Was he the one that Nephi, with great esteem, calls “*the prophet*” (1 Nephi 19:11)?
- Are there any other texts from ancient Israel that shed

light on this important prophet whose writings are preserved in the Book of Mormon?

- What do the roots represent?
- What is the bitterness of the fruit?
- What problems are signaled by loftiness, ripening, and beginning to decay?
- What are the implications of growing old and being rejuvenated by young and tender shoots?
- What is entailed by the rigors of pruning and burning that are necessary steps in the process of producing quality fruit by which its tree is known?

Although we cannot be certain of answers to each of these questions (and in some cases competing answers are advanced in various chapters of this book), available information about these and many other topics clearly establishes Zenos's allegory of the olive tree as standing prominently among those very plain and precious parts restored by the Book of Mormon.

The authors in these chapters approach their subjects from a variety of perspectives, including historical, botanical, symbolical, linguistical, religious, and theological. Lengthy bibliographies listing books and articles about the olive in terms of archeobotany, history, and biblical usage are contained in these articles. The resulting research offers factual information and reasoned interpretations that will be interesting and useful to anyone seeking a better understanding of the biblical imagery of the olive tree and of the vineyard, an important motif frequently employed in scripture.

Each time Jesus spoke in parables in teaching the people of Palestine, it was as though he hung a mirror on the walls of those little villages that reflected the life and surroundings of that world. In addition, as people down through the

ages have looked into those mirrors, they have seen themselves, their worlds, and their concerns, amplified and clarified by that literary lens. The allegory of the olive tree in Jacob 5 works the same way. Its minute details reflect a settled Israelite background and a prophet who is deeply interested in cultivating a righteous posterity in the promised land and who is excited and fascinated by the almost miraculous regenerative powers and remarkable productivity of the amazing olive tree. For the people of that land, the olive had become a burgeoning symbol of life, fruitfulness, blessing, righteousness, abundance, love, prosperity, health, and eternal life. No contemporary symbol that we can think of conveys to the modern mind the same power that the symbolism of the olive conveyed to the ancient mind.

The allegory speaks mainly of one much-loved tree. But there are others—an entire orchard of trees—each of which is valued by the Lord. In the allegory he toils personally alongside his hardworking crew of devoted servants as they cut and prune and transplant and nourish the precious trees. All this labor invites many interpretations and applications. The allegory can be understood locally, perhaps in the context of a northern Israelite prophet who is deeply disturbed by the wickedness and apostasy that he sees in his beloved Israel in its early monarchical period or slightly later. Or it may be understood cosmically, embracing the entire sweep of human history, or at least large portions of it. The allegory proves to be, at the same time, both precisely detailed and broadly pliable. Obviously, each individual and each group, in virtually any circumstance or period of time, can find in this graphic image meanings that are especially attractive to them in their daily lives and deepest thoughts. This allegory typologically represents many forms of God's love and care, as well as many states

of righteousness and apostasy, whether collective or individual.

While Zenos's allegory was addressed expressly to the house of Israel (Jacob 5:1) and thus focuses on the central tree that symbolizes Israel, the vineyard in this story represents the entire world (Jacob 6:3). There are many trees in that vineyard. Only through their interdependence and mutual support do the trees of the orchard become fruitful and pleasing to the Lord. The central tree is preserved only by receiving grafts from other trees, and vice versa.

Because of the olive tree's distinctive characteristics, it has long been a universal symbol of life, hope, and peace. It lives long. It does not give up. It can readily be transplanted. With a little encouragement it survives in stony soil. It is evergreen, a beautiful sight offering shade and rest. Its fruit produces soothing oil. The olive branch brought back by the dove of peace showed Noah that life could again exist on earth (Genesis 8:11). Ironically, the olive belongs primarily to the eastern Mediterranean, a land today that thirsts for peace. We hope that the papers presented in this collection will enrich our understanding of this symbol of peace and well-being; that they will be of benefit to our often tense and fragmented world, giving ultimate hope for a world of peace and millennial harmony among all lands and peoples, even though the soil may sometimes be dry and the prospects bleak.

Particular thanks are given to Melvin Thorne and Shirley Ricks for their editorial and production assistance; to Gaye Strathearn, James Whitaker, Lisa Dickman, and Kathleen Reynolds for citation checking; to Art Pollard for work on the index of passages; to Douglas Waddoups for his drawings, and Michael Lyon for work on illustrations; to Wilford Hess, Daniel Fairbanks, and Melvin Thorne for

photographs; to Brigham Young University for making its facilities available; and to the many workers and contributors at the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies who have made this longtime project a reality.

John W. Welch

Stephen D. Ricks

Provo, Utah, September 1992

1

The Olive Press: A Symbol of Christ

Truman G. Madsen

“All things bear record of me” (Moses 6:63). So we have been taught. But when my feet first touched the ground of Israel more than a decade ago, I still cherished the fallacy that the Master’s words were the main vehicle for his gospel message and that environment and circumstance mattered little, if at all. I soon learned otherwise.

Throughout scripture, the Teacher of teachers and his prophets have invoked their surroundings to verify revelatory acts and sayings. The cosmos is their visual aid. In the very rocks and trees of Israel, God’s meaning is lodged—meaning that can reach the center of the soul. Amid all those surroundings, no figure looms larger on the landscape than does the olive tree.

Religious literature, ancient and modern, is replete with images of a tree of life that is to be planted in a goodly land beside a pure stream.¹ Some typologies regard it as the link at the very navel of the earth—the source of nourishment between parent and child—and place it at the temple mount in Jerusalem, where heaven and earth meet.² Nephi was taught that both the tree of life and the fountain of living waters that sustain it represent the love of God. This love, “which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men,” was, he was inspired to say, “the most

desirable above all things." But even that superlative did not satisfy the angel-narrator of the vision, who responded, "Yea, and the most joyous to the soul" (1 Nephi 11:22–23). Such a tree has symbolized Israel, the family of the faithful, and the Redeemer of Israel. Prophets have sung of the time when the branches that have been rent from that tree and dispersed to the ends of the earth would somehow be gathered. Then, by graftings and prunings, the tree would be renewed and become exquisitely productive (see 1 Nephi 10:12–14).

One Jewish legend identifies the tree of life as the olive tree,³ and with good reason. The olive tree is an evergreen, not a deciduous tree. Its leaves do not seasonally fade nor fall. Through scorching heat and winter cold they are continually rejuvenated. Without cultivation the olive is a wild, unruly, easily corrupted tree. Only after long, patient cultivating, usually eight to ten years, does it begin to yield fruit. Long after that, new shoots often come forth from apparently dead roots. As one stands in the olive groves and is struck by the gnarled tree trunks that are at once ugly and beautiful, it is hard to avoid the impression of travail—of ancient life and renewing life. Today some trees, still productive on the Mount of Olives, are 1,800 years old and perhaps older.⁴ The olive tree appears almost "immortal."

To this day, preparing the rock-pocked land of Israel and then planting, cultivating, pruning, grafting, and harvesting olive trees is an arduous process. Even after the harvest, olives are bitter, useless to man or beast. To make them edible, one must place them in a large stone box, layer them with salt and vinegar, make more layers of olives, and add more purgatives. Slowly the bitterness is purged from them. These refined olives are a delicious staple food that graces the tables of the common people and of the rich.



An olive press in Palestine. It is sobering for people today to visualize the ancient purgation of the olive and the intense, seemingly unending pressures that cause the precious, salving oil to flow. The olive press is an unsurpassed symbol of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the master of the vineyard.

To produce olive oil in ancient times, the olives had to be crushed in a press. Seasoned olives were placed in strong bags and flattened on a furrowed stone. Then a huge, crushing, circular rock was rolled around on top, moved by a mule or an ox encouraged by a stinging whip. Another method used heavy wooden levers or screws twisting beams downward like a winch upon the stone with the same effect: pressure, pressure, pressure—until the oil flowed.

Olive oil was used both internally and externally. It was a cooking oil, made better by heating, and was a condiment for salads and breads and meats. The pure oil had other vital uses: it was an almost universal antidote, reversing the effects of a variety of poisons. It was often used in a poultice believed to drain infection or sickness. As an ointment,

olive oil—mingled with other liquids—soothed bruises and wounds and open sores. Oil and wine were poured by the Good Samaritan into the wounds of the robbed and beaten traveler near Jericho.⁵ Oil and wine were also poured by the temple priests on the altar of the temple.

Olive oil was also the substance of light and heat in Palestine. Into olive lamps—small vessels with a hole at each end—one poured the oil. Even in a darkened room one lamp, one thin flame of light, was enough to lighten the face. A Jewish oral teaching says the drinking of olive oil is likewise light to the mind—that it enhances intellectual processes. The mash that remained after repeated crushings of oil was a household fuel, needed even in the summer in the Judean desert after sunset. The image of pouring oil on troubled waters, and the associated olive branch of peace—such as the offering of peace and relief to Noah after raging seas—were common in Bible lore. In other spiritual contexts oil was the token of forgiveness. Hence Paul speaks of it as “the oil of gladness” (Hebrews 1:9).⁶

Did Jesus know all this? Surely all this—and more. Was there, then, significance in his climactic resort to the Mount of Olives? Is that mount, all of it, symbolic and sacred?

On that mount and the nearby temple mount four holinesses came together: the place, the time, the person, and the name.

First, the *place*. The Mount of Olives overlooked the temple—which by now had been desecrated—the temple that Jesus first called, on a day of cleansing, “my Father’s house,” but later, “My house” (see John 2:16; Matthew 21:13). Beyond the Herodian courts of the temple was a Holy of Holies. Two olive-wood pillars stood before its entrance. Nearby stood the seven-branched Menorah, the perpetual lamp, the everlastingly burning tree. The “heavi-

est and the purest oil," from vessels with the high priest's seal, burned day and night in the Menorah.⁷

For use in the tabernacle in the wilderness Moses had been instructed, "And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always" (Exodus 27:20). Later, the rabbis interpreted this to mean that a man, like the olive, must be beaten and bruised, but all in order to glow with light.⁸

We learn in the newly translated *Temple Scroll* (one of the Dead Sea Scrolls) that by at least 150 B.C., a segment of Jewry envisioned a future messianic temple wherein the New Wine Festival was to be followed by a New Oil Festival. One-half *hin* (about three-fourths of a gallon) of oil from each tribe of Israel was to be brought to the temple to light the lamps. The climax was to be the eating of olives and the anointing with new oil. The purpose was to ransom (*kapper*) the year's oil crop for its use by the people and on the temple altar.⁹

A Jewish tradition says that when Adam was about to die, he sent Eve and his son Seth back to the garden for healing oil. At the threshold they were met by an angel who said, "There will be no oil again until the meridian of time when the Messiah comes, and then the oil will be from the olive tree."¹⁰ This tradition saw its fulfillment when Jesus went in his final hours to the Mount of Olives.

Jesus went onto the mount overlooking the temple "as he was wont" (Luke 22:39). In the last days of his life, he lodged or "abode" there (Luke 21:37). On that hill (perhaps halfway up) was a vineyard of olive trees, reminiscent of the allegory of the tame and wild olive tree in the book of Jacob. The trees in that allegorical vineyard would have been hewn down and cast into the fire were it not for the

pleading of the servant (Jacob 5:50). The Lord of the vineyard would be grieved to lose even one tree. The Lord of the vineyard, according to one interpretation, was the Father of us all. The servant in the vineyard was the Messiah. The task, the weightiest in all history.

The garden on the mount is called Gethsemane. *Gat* (*geth*) in Hebrew means “press.” *Shemen* means “oil.”¹¹ This was the garden of the olive press. Remnants of ancient olive presses near cisterns that preserved the costly oil can still be seen in upper Galilee and in Bethany.

As one stands in this garden of the olive press—the setting for the Atonement—it is sobering to visualize the purification of the olive and the intense, seemingly unending pressure that caused the precious oil to flow. Indeed, the symbolism of the place is inescapable.

Another holiness converged on that event—a holiness of *time*. It was the hour, the week of *Pesach*, Passover—that long-honored sacred celebration of Israel’s divine deliverance from Egypt. After the destruction of the temple in A.D. 72, the ritual was modified. But at the time of Jesus this was the appointed day when they brought the lamb, the unspotted lamb, down that very mount, the Mount of Olives, to the altar. It was roasted and the blood of the lamb was sprinkled on the altar.¹²

The *person* was holy. This was *Yeshua ha-Mashiach*, Jesus the Messiah. As Isaiah foresaw, invoking yet another image of a tree, he was the stem of Jesse, from the stump or root of the house of David (Isaiah 11:1–5; D&C 113). To Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, he had been “the Holy One of Israel.” In the flesh he sat at Jacob’s Well, and to a despised woman of Samaria announced for the first time, “I . . . am he” (John 4:26) who would give to all “living water” (John 4:10).

Finally, the *name* was holy. The root word for *Messiah* in

the book of Daniel means “anointed one,” with connotations of coronation and ordination.¹³ In Gethsemane was the night when in the hardest of hard ways, Jesus would become the *anointed* one. The word *messias*, as used by John, has another Hebrew root: *yīshar* (ṢHR) meaning to glow with light as one glistens when one is anointed with olive oil.¹⁴ To merit that name, to take it upon him, to seal it everlastingly upon himself—to become the Light of the worlds—Jesus was required to tread the press. In eventual triumph the Messiah was to say, “I have trodden the winepress alone, . . . and none were with me” (D&C 133:50). In this case it is the wine press, not the olive press, but the two merge in allegory as in life. “The Lamb of God hath overcome and trodden the wine-press alone, even the wine-press of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God.”¹⁵ It is one thing to take off one’s sandals and trample the grapes in the stone vat. It is another to be trodden upon, trampled, crushed until the very tissues of the heart cry out for relief and release and until “mercy hath compassion on mercy and claimeth her own” (D&C 88:40), “that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people” (Alma 7:12).

“Mine hour,” he had said often, “is not yet come” (John 2:4). But now it had come. As Jesus prayed that night, the motion was internal. It was destruction, not distraction that he threw himself against. Somehow he purged the ultimate bitterness, as bitter as gall, the consequences of death-dealing iniquity of all sons and daughters of God—not just of this earth, but of other earths also.¹⁶

“How?” we ask. But a child can understand. Did he not commend little children to us, promising that the mightiest, the greatest in his kingdom would be as they? Unashamedly little children, without full understanding, wince

and weep with others, and they dance in the contagion of joy. Pain—especially the pain of abandonment—hurts, even the intimation of it. In those of us who are far away, even two thousand years and ten thousand miles away, it hurts enough to unstiffen the neck and melt the heart and bring contrition to the spirit; it hurts enough to make us sick. Or, if we are moved enough to receive Him—who could and did feel, for us with us—it hurts enough to make us well. The pressure worked upon him as the olive press worked upon the olive.

In glorifying the Father, Jesus suffered with a suffering so great that drops of blood came from his pores (Mosiah 3:7; Luke 22:44; D&C 19:18). It is not a spectacle one wishes to recall—rather we recoil—but we are commanded each week to remember that hour. What must it have been like, to have been promised the power to summon legions of angels to end the ordeal—and not to summon them?

When was it enough? During the same night, he was betrayed, accosted, abused—purged like the olive. With lashes he was ripped into, pierced. The descending weight begun on the olive mount was weightier than the cross he was to carry. As the cross ruthlessly held him, he groaned, “I thirst!” And whether in trivial aid or mockery, someone thrust a sponge full of vinegar—one of the purgatives added to olives in the stone boxes—to his lips. “It is finished,” he said (John 19:28–30). “Thy will is done” (JST, Matthew 27:50).

At the last, a spear was thrust into his side. Out of it flowed water and blood, as oil flows from the purged and pressed olive. Simeon, bowed down with age, as he held the infant Jesus in the temple, had prophesied of that last wound, that proof of the full measure of his giving. To Mary he had said, “A sword shall pierce through thy own soul

also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed" (Luke 2:35).

Today, as we stand amidst the olive groves, the heart hears the promise of modern revelation that the parable of the wise and foolish virgins is yet to be fulfilled: "Wherefore, be faithful, praying always, having your lamps trimmed and burning [alight and afire], and oil with you [reserves equal to days of affliction and of glory], that you may be ready at the coming of the Bridegroom" (D&C 33:17).

And as we stand before the ancient olive press, the heart is invaded with a "never again": "Never again in indifference will I speak or hear the words, 'I anoint you with this oil which has been consecrated.' " Jesus Christ is the veritable tree and olive beaten for the light, and there flows from him unto this whole earth, and beyond, the redemptive power of healing and soothing and ministering to the needy. When the life of attempted faithfulness is bludgeoned and becomes wearing and wearying, we are to remember that no great and good fruit comes easily. If one is to become like the Savior, the light of the world, it will be necessary to endure the days of affliction and be prepared for joyous reunion with the master-servant of the Lord's vineyard.

Notes

An earlier form of this essay was published in *Speeches of the Year* (Provo: Brigham Young University, 1983).

1. See Carroll L. Meyers, *The Tabernacle Menorah*, Dissertation Series No. 2, American Schools of Oriental Research (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1976), 133–56; cf. D&C 97:7, 9; 124:26.

2. See E. A. Butterworth, *The Tree at the Navel of the Earth* (Berlin: DeGruyter, 1970).

3. Louis Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, 7 vols. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1947), 1:93; 2:119. See also *Apocalypse of Moses* 9, 12. In 2 Enoch 25, a life-giving oil is described, and "the

appearance of that oil was more than a great light, and its anointing was excellent too" (see *Legends of the Jews*, 5:113).

4. *Encyclopedia Americana*, 1979 ed., 30 vols., s.v. "olive," 20:713–15.

5. Luke 10:25–37. See also the apocryphal Gospel of Philip: "The savior gave nothing to the wounded man except wine and oil. It is nothing other than the ointment. And he healed the wounds. For love covereth a multitude of sins." Robert M. Wilson, *The Gospel of Philip* (New York: Harper and Row, 1962); cf. Hugh Nibley, *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1975), 286. Joseph Smith said of Nauvoo, "If there is a place on earth where men should cultivate the spirit and pour in the oil and wine in the bosoms of the afflicted, it is in this place." *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, Joseph Fielding Smith, comp. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1977), 294.

6. The Greek root of this word is *elaia*, meaning an olive tree or fruit.

7. Leon Yarden, *The Tree of Light* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1971), 43.

8. Martin Buber, *Tales of the Hasidim*, 2 vols. (New York: Schocken Books, 1947–48), 2:117. Cf. Hosea 14:6.

9. Jacob Milgrom, "The Temple Scroll," *Biblical Archaeologist* (Sept. 1978): 108.

10. Apocalypse of Moses 9:3; 13:1–2.

11. Francis Brown, S.R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), s.v. "Gat" and "Shemen."

12. Alfred Edersheim, *The Temple* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1909), 16.

13. Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 602.

14. James Strong, *Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1976), 51, No. 3323.

15. D&C 88:106; see also Isaiah 63:3; JST, Revelation 19:15; D&C 76:107; 133:50. In Joseph Smith's translation of Revelation 19:15, in the phrase "he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God," the first *of* is changed to *in*. The *of* renderings make it appear that Jesus was the object of the fierce wrath of God. The *in* revision suggests that as the Son of God he brought his own fierce wrath to bear against sin and sinfulness.

16. D&C 76:24; *Times and Seasons* 4/6 (1 Feb. 1843): 82–85.

2

Jacob's Allegory: The Mystery of Christ

M. Catherine Thomas

Joseph Smith explained the way to understand parables and allegories: “I have a key by which I understand the scriptures. I enquire, what was the question which drew out the answer?”¹ Jacob poses two key questions in his introduction to the allegory, which provide some clues to its meaning. First, Jacob asks: “Why not speak of the *atonement* of Christ, and attain to a perfect knowledge of him?” (Jacob 4:12). Jacob then points to the Jews’ deliberate efforts to distance God and render him incomprehensible: they sought to create a God who could not be understood (Jacob 4:14). For their self-inflicted blindness God took away “his plainness from them . . . because they desired it” (Jacob 4:14). Here Jacob asks the second key question: “My beloved, how is it possible that these [the Jews], after having rejected the sure foundation, can ever build upon it, that it may become the head of their corner? Behold, my beloved brethren, I will unfold this *mystery* unto you” (Jacob 4:17–18). Among other meanings, a mystery is a spiritual truth grasped only through divine revelation. The mystery that Jacob unfolds, therefore, counters the Jews’ deliberate mystification of God and reveals the true nature of Jesus Christ and his divine activity in the lives of even the most intractable of men. Jacob’s two key questions alert the reader that the allegory

will deal with grace, atonement, and their relationship to Israel.

Superficially the allegory is the story of a man and his olive tree and the man's efforts to restore the deteriorating tree to its former pristine condition. At a deeper level, the allegory treats God's response to Israel's spiritual death, represented by its geographically scattered condition. Separation of the people of Israel from each other indicates that the atonement is not working in their lives; otherwise, they would live in Zion together. The allegory describes God's efforts to gather these disparate parts of Israel into at-one-ment with him. Fifteen times we read that he wishes to preserve the harvestable fruit and lay it up, as he says, "to mine own self."

In Latter-day Saint usage, *atonement*, or *at-one-ment*, refers not only to the act of redemption Jesus wrought in Gethsemane and on the cross, but also to the Lord's ongoing labors to bring his children back into oneness with him. After all, it is his work, as well as his glory, to bring to pass the eternal life of man (Moses 1:39). The word *atone-ment* first appears in William Tyndale's 1526 English version of the Bible.² He used the word *at-one-ment* to translate the Greek word for *reconciliation* (*katalagē*) (Romans 5:11). The Savior's yearnings for this state of oneness with his children appear not only in this allegory but also in such places as the great intercessory prayer in John 17 and the luminous prayer sequences in 3 Nephi 19. In understanding Jacob's allegory, it is helpful to understand the strength of the divine desire behind the process of at-one-ment.

We approach the meaning of the atonement in the allegory by consulting scripture for additional references to trees. Scripture abounds with symbolic trees. A tree planted by a river is an Old Testament symbol of a righteous man

(Psalm 1:3, Jeremiah 17:8). Isaiah writes, "The Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; . . . that they might be called trees of righteousness" (Isaiah 61:1, 3). In Daniel's dream the great tree represents a man (Daniel 4:10, 22). Another tree in Isaiah produces a stem (of Jesse), which is Christ (D&C 113:1–2). Two famous trees grow in Eden: the tree of knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life (Genesis 2:9, 17). A millennial tree of life in Revelation 22:2 has leaves to heal the nations, an obvious reference to the Savior. Jesus is hanged on a tree of life (Acts 5:30). In vision Lehi and Nephi see a divine tree that is connected with Jesus' saving ministry (1 Nephi 8:10; 11:8). Lehi's dream tree receives at least three meanings: the Son of God and his divine activity (1 Nephi 11:7); the love of God (1 Nephi 11:22, 25); the tree of life (1 Nephi 11:25; 15:22). Since these meanings all overlap, we would understand that Lehi's dream tree represents multiple facets of Christ.

Most often in scripture, then, the tree is an anthropomorphic symbol. A tree serves well as such a symbol because it has, after all, limbs, a circulatory system, the bearing of fruit, and so forth. Specifically, scriptural trees stand either for Christ and his attributes or for man.

Here we might make an observation about divine symbols. The finite mind wants to pin down a one-to-one correspondence between the elements of an allegory and that which they represent, but the divine mind works in multiple layers of meanings for symbols. In scripture the meaning often lies in the aggregate of allusions and associations. The olive tree is one of these layered symbols. It is Israel at the macrocosmic level; it is also an individual Israelite being nourished by an attentive God.

But the olive tree seems also to reflect the Savior himself, as we can see when we analyze the relationship



Olive branch laden with fruit. The olive tree symbolizes the atonement and the sweet fruit meet for repentance, mankind's efforts to revive their former relationship with God, and God's love and nurturing that lay up fruit against the decay of the world.

between Jacob's olive tree and Lehi's dream tree. The two trees appear in juxtaposition with each other in 1 Nephi, chapters 8 through 15. Lehi's dream tree first appears in chapter 8. The first reference to the olive tree appears two chapters later in chapter 10, grafting in to this olive tree being defined as coming to the knowledge of the true Messiah (1 Nephi 10:12-14). Then in chapter 11 Lehi's dream tree is shown to Nephi, who observes that the tree is the Son of God shedding forth his love (1 Nephi 11:7, 21-22). Next, in chapter 15, Nephi explicates the olive tree for his brethren, saying that the covenant people will

receive strength and nourishment from the *true* vine when they are grafted into the *true* olive tree (1 Nephi 15:16). The reference to the true vine suggests a passage from John: "I [Christ] am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5). This discussion of the true vine and the *true* olive tree leads to Nephi's explication of the dream tree, suggesting that a strong relationship between these two trees exists in the minds of both Lehi and Nephi since they are discussed alternately. Thus the dream tree is Christ, and the true olive tree is Christ.

Extending this point, we can examine the fruit of these two trees. When Jacob is about to introduce the allegory he exhorts the reader to be the *first-fruits* of Christ (Jacob 4:11). Nephi says that the fruit from Lehi's dream tree is "*most precious* and most desirable above all other fruits" (1 Nephi 15:36). In identical language, the olive tree's natural fruit is "*most precious* above all other fruit" (Jacob 5:61) and "*most precious* unto him from the beginning" (Jacob 5:74); that is, the fruit from both trees is described as "most precious." It would seem that the fruit represents harvestable souls, or those that can be or have been sanctified by the Savior's atoning power. Both the olive tree and the dream tree in their sanctified state are the same tree, and the merging of these trees through these chapters heightens the message of at-one-ment between man and Christ. At the end of time, all of the trees and fruits have merged. The Lord observes that the trees have become "like unto one body; and the fruits . . . equal" (Jacob 5:74).

While we consider the olive tree, we may also wish to examine olive oil for additional atonement meaning. In ancient Israel, the olive tree was the tree of life; olive oil was

used in sacrifices and in ritual purification, rites which symbolized the restoration of God's favor and the return of joy to a man previously disgraced.³ It was associated with vigor and fertility. The sick were anointed with oil. Brides were anointed prior to marriage. Anointing with oil and washing and dressing symbolized a change of status throughout the Old Testament; for example, the consecration of Aaron to the priesthood included washing, donning of special garments, and anointing his head with oil (Leviticus 8:6–12). The holy anointing oil, which could not be used for any profane purpose, was made by Moses in the desert and was kept in the Holy of Holies, serving for the anointing of the Tabernacle and of all high priests and kings. Prophets were anointed with oil, as were temples and altars (Genesis 28:18). Olive oil was indispensable in the preparation of the Passover lamb.⁴ We remember that Christ is the *Anointed One*.

Perhaps the ultimate definition of oil in scripture, that which draws together all those mentioned above, appears in the Savior's parable of the Ten Virgins (Matthew 25:1–13), which he explicates in D&C 45, identifying the oil as the Holy Ghost (D&C 45:56–57). The Lord Jesus is the agent of the Atonement, but the medium of the at-one-ment is the Holy Ghost—that sap or moisture that flows from the trunk through the branches. Perhaps something of this idea suggests itself in Jacob 5:18: “The branches of the wild tree have taken hold of the *moisture* of the root thereof, that the root thereof hath brought forth much . . . tame fruit.” Jacob makes a similar metaphorical connection when he exhorts Israel not to “quench the Holy Spirit” (Jacob 6:8).

Though the symbolic elements of the allegory represent historical people and events, a yet greater insight may lie in the allegory as a theodicy, that is, God's explication of himself and his work. Not only did the Jews dematerialize God

and scramble the facts about him, but so also has every apostasy since. The mystery that Jacob illuminates is that God is not distant, but full of grace—of divine enabling power—ceaselessly involving himself with each of his children, seeking a response, seeking a relationship.

It is in the figures of pruning, grafting, and digging about that the Lord reveals most specifically the function of the Atonement. The allegory describes this divine activity as wrought both in the tree and in the environment of the tree, suggesting that God seeks access to man at several points. *Grafting in* might represent events and experiences which bring one to Christ—conversion. *Digging about* suggests the divine structuring of one's environment for individual tutorials. *Dunging* suggests spiritual nourishing. As to *pruning*, we might understand those painful experiences in which we feel stymied as the divine will operates against our own. Hugh B. Brown provided an excellent illustration in his little parable of the currant bush. At the end the Gardener speaks to the little bush, which he has cut back again and again:

Do not cry. . . . What I have done to you was necessary. . . . You were not intended for what you sought to be. . . . If I had allowed you to continue . . . you would have failed in the purpose for which I planted you and my plans for you would have been defeated. You must not weep; some day when you are richly laden with experience you will say, "He was a wise gardener. He knew the purpose of my earth life. . . . I thank him now for what I thought was cruel." . . . Help me, dear God, to endure the pruning, and to grow as you would have me grow; to take my allotted place in life and ever more to say, "Thy will not mine be done."⁵

This ceaseless divine activity in seeking to bring men into his presence, even while they walk the earth, is

reflected in the continual nourishing, digging, and pruning going on in the allegorical vineyard. The word *nourish* appears twenty-one times in the seventy-seven verses of the chapter, along with the words *digging*, *dunging*, *pruning*, and *preserving*, which appear frequently along with *nourishing*, indicating that the idea of nourishing, of personal attention to Israel and to Israelites, is a major theme of the allegory. The perfect knowledge of Christ that Jacob refers to (Jacob 4:14), that is, at-one-ment with him, is achieved in Christ's revelation of himself through the pruning, digging, and nourishing of his individual covenant children.

The idea that God himself seeks continual association with each of his covenant children is expressed in other Book of Mormon passages. Alma declared, "A shepherd hath called after you and is *still* calling after you. . . . The good shepherd doth call you; yea, and in his own name he doth call you, which is the name of Christ" (Alma 5:37–38). Lehi exclaimed, "I am encircled about eternally in the arms of his love" (2 Nephi 1:15). Helaman wrote to Moroni: "May the Lord our God, who has redeemed us and made us free, keep you continually in his presence" (Alma 58:41). Christ spoke poignantly in Revelation, "Behold I stand at the door and knock" (Revelation 3:20).

If God is seeking access to his children continually, what is the meaning of the periods of divine absence in the allegory? The Lord declares, "I have stretched forth mine hand *almost* all the day long" (Jacob 5:47). Jacob drops the word *almost* when he reiterates: "He stretches forth his hands unto them *all* the day long. . . . Come with full purpose of heart, and cleave unto God as he cleaveth unto you. . . . For why will ye die? . . . For behold, . . . ye have been nourished by the good word of God *all* the day long" (Jacob 6:4–7). *Cleave* is atonement language. It is not God who has ceased

to cleave, but man who has rejected God's love. These periods in which we do not see divine activity signify not so much the Master's absence, but rather *Israel's* voluntary withdrawal from the true olive tree.

At the end the Lord speaks to his servant, "Blessed art thou, . . . because ye have been diligent in laboring with me in my vineyard. . . . Ye shall have joy with me because of the fruit of my vineyard" (Jacob 5:75). Jacob echoes these words: "How blessed are they who have labored diligently in his vineyard" (Jacob 6:3)—those who have participated in the divine activity of at-one-ment. In latter days the Lord has said, "I will gather together in *one* all things, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth" (D&C 27:13). The allegory underscores the fact that the greatest work going forth on the earth is the work of bringing those who are scattered, alienated, and miserable back into harmony and oneness with each other and with the Creator.

One of the key insights that emerges from the allegory is that the power of the atonement seeks to affect men at every level of their existence. It urges people together geographically into Zions. It promotes generosity and consecration of goods. It prompts people to resonate emotionally and to synergize spiritually. The Lord says, "I say unto you, be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine" (D&C 38:27).

Finally, an individual must discover Jacob's mystery for himself. The greatest value of the allegory may be that it serves to make one conscious of the efforts of the Lord to draw him by "the enticings of the Holy Spirit" (Mosiah 3:19) into a working relationship with a powerful Benefactor. This approach to the allegory enlarges one's confidence in the Lord's unceasing labors in his behalf and prompts him to search within to find the evidences of divine instruction and nurturing. The allegory teaches that

the structure of oneness, of at-one-ment, is already in place. One need only discover and embrace the relationship.

Notes

1. Joseph Smith's Journal, kept by Willard Richards, 29 January 1843, cited in *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1980), 5:261.

2. See *atone* and *atonement* in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971).

3. *Encyclopedia Judaica*, 17 vols. (Jerusalem: Keter, 1972), s.v. "oils," 12:1347.

4. *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, 12 vols. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1901), s.v. "oil," 9:392.

5. Hugh B. Brown, "The Gardener and the Currant Bush," in *Eternal Quest* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1936), 243.

3

Nephite Uses and Interpretations of Zenos

Noel B. Reynolds

Zenos's allegory of the olive tree, which Jacob copied from the brass plates onto the small plates, was used as a source by several Book of Mormon prophets. Lehi, Nephi, Jacob, and Alma quote or paraphrase passages from Zenos or his allegory in describing their own visions, prophecies, and teachings. In studying these borrowings, we can be completely certain of few conclusions; but we can find many probable connections to Zenos's writings in Nephite prophecy, all of which attest to his importance among the Nephites.

Words of Zenos are most obviously detected in the following Book of Mormon texts: 1 Nephi 19:8–17; 22:15–17, 23–26; 2 Nephi 2:30; Jacob 5:2–77; Alma 33:3–18; 34:7; Helaman 8:18–19; 15:10–13; 3 Nephi 10:14–16. These texts deal with such main themes as God's covenant with his people, the House of Israel; his remembrance of that covenant, preserving his people wherever they may be; the general wickedness of people who will reject God and the testimony of Jesus Christ through pride, hatred, and unbelief; the scattering of branches of Israel to the four quarters of the earth; the existence of a choice, remote land; the recovery or gathering of Israel, the first last and the last first; the joy and fruitfulness of the righteous; and the suffering,

grief, and destruction of the wicked, especially by fire. Book of Mormon prophets apparently borrowed words and phrases relevant to these themes not only from the allegory, which concerns Israel as a nation, but also from the other writings attributable to Zenos that deal explicitly with the individual's relationship to God and the atonement of Jesus Christ.

The general pattern of Nephite reliance on Zenos seems to have been established early. His language and phraseology show up repeatedly in the writings of Lehi, Nephi, and Jacob, including passages that have not previously been linked to Zenos. The following study attempts to identify many places where these Book of Mormon prophets appear to have been influenced by the earlier writings of Zenos. Whenever a later Book of Mormon prophet uses words or phrases prominent in the writings of Zenos, I shall presume that a possibility exists that the later writer was conscious of or influenced by the earlier Zenos text.

LEHI

Lehi's indebtedness to Zenos is most obvious in two texts: in his prophecies about the House of Israel and his final blessings to his posterity.

The earliest use of Zenos's allegory in the Book of Mormon is by Lehi. After telling his sons about his vision of the tree of life, "he spake unto them concerning the Jews" (1 Nephi 10:2). To illustrate his prophecy about the Jews and Gentiles, Lehi uses language from Zenos's allegory. When he teaches his sons that the Jews would dwindle in unbelief, he says that the house of Israel "should be compared like unto an olive-tree, whose branches should be broken off and should be scattered" (1 Nephi 10:12). To explain that the house of Israel would later be gathered together again,

he says that “the natural branches of the olive-tree, or the remnants of the house of Israel, should be grafted in” (verse 14). Lehi connects the breaking off of the branches to dwindling in unbelief and interprets the scattering of the branches in Zenos’s allegory to mean, in part, that “we should be led with one accord into the land of promise, unto the fulfilling of the word of the Lord, that we should be scattered upon all the face of the earth” (verse 13). He interprets the grafting of the natural branches back into the olive tree as regaining knowledge of Christ: “The natural branches of the olive-tree, or the remnants of the house of Israel, should be grafted in, or come to the knowledge of the true Messiah, their Lord and their Redeemer” (verse 14). These themes reappear in later Nephite interpretation of Zenos.

In his final teachings to his sons in 2 Nephi 1–4, Lehi interprets Zenos’s allegory further, and his interpretation is significantly shaped by his own revelations. The allegory tells of one branch of the olive tree being planted in “a good spot of ground” (Jacob 5:25, 43) “which was choice unto me above all other parts of the land of my vineyard” (Jacob 5:43). Apparently the Nephites understood this passage to refer to themselves (see 1 Nephi 12). Lehi’s interpretation of Zenos’s reference to “this good spot of ground . . . choice . . . above all other parts” was influenced by his own revelation that “the Lord God has covenanted this land” to him. For him it is not only “a land which is choice above all other lands” but also “a land of promise” and “a land for the inheritance of my seed” (2 Nephi 1:5). Furthermore, it is consecrated to be “a land of liberty” to those who serve the Lord or to be cursed “if iniquity shall abound” (2 Nephi 1:7). These attributes of the land that were revealed to Lehi give more concrete meaning to Zenos’s description

“choice.” This concept appears also in the writings of Nephi (1 Nephi 13:30), for the first time the Lord spoke to Nephi he promised to lead him to a “land of promise,” which would be “choice above all other lands” (1 Nephi 2:20). Apparently, the choiceness of the land predated the scattering of Israel, for the Lord used the same language in leading the Jaredites there (Ether 1:38), and in his abridgment of the Jaredite record, Moroni repeats it seven times (Ether 1:42; 2:7, 10, 15; 9:20; 10:28; 13:2).

Zenos’s allegory also emphasizes that this branch of Israel was hidden in the last of “the nethermost parts of the vineyard” (Jacob 5:13, 14). Lehi explains this sense of isolation further by announcing that “there shall none come into this land save they shall be brought by the hand of the Lord” (2 Nephi 1:6) and that in the Lord’s wisdom “this land should be kept as yet from the knowledge of other nations” (2 Nephi 1:8). Zenos emphasized the Lord’s role in taking the broken branches of his olive to these nethermost parts of the vineyard, and Lehi adds the idea that Nephi in particular had “been an instrument in the hands of God, in bringing us forth into the land of promise” (2 Nephi 1:24).

Lehi elaborates the implications of the Lord’s promise to all those he will bring out of the land of Jerusalem, using insights from Zenos’s prophecies. If they will keep his commandments, they will “prosper upon the face of this land” and “dwell safely forever” (2 Nephi 1:9). But “when the time comes that they shall dwindle in unbelief” and “reject . . . the true Messiah,” especially after “knowing the great and marvelous works of the Lord,” the just judgments of God will rest upon them, and they will “be scattered and smitten” (2 Nephi 1:10–11; cf. Jacob’s words in 2 Nephi 9:27 and 10:20). Lehi further expresses his fears that for “the hardness of [their] hearts” they will be “cut off and

destroyed” or that “a cursing will come upon [them]” and they will suffer famine and sword and be hated (2 Nephi 1:17–18). The alternate cycles of productive growth and pruning of the Zenos allegory are reflected in the rule Lehi cited as governing the Lord’s relationship to this branch of Israel: “Inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments ye shall prosper in the land; but inasmuch as ye will not keep my commandments ye shall be cut off from my presence” (2 Nephi 1:20; cf. 1 Nephi 2:20).

When Lehi blesses the posterity of Laman and Lemuel, he promises them that the Lord “will not suffer that [they] shall perish” (2 Nephi 4:7). In this blessing, Lehi outlines how the Lord will fulfill Zenos’s prophecy that he would not immediately pluck off and burn “the other part of the tree [that] has brought forth wild fruit” (Jacob 5:25–27) but would let it grow wild even until it overcomes and displaces the good branch. Eventually, this remaining branch will not be destroyed, but will be grafted back into the natural tree, that is, restored to the knowledge of the covenants of Israel and the true Messiah (Jacob 5:56).

Finally, Lehi interprets prophecies of Joseph in Egypt in terms identical to those of the Zenos allegory, suggesting the possibility that Joseph had received these same revelations and that his insights on the brass plates may have guided Lehi and Nephi in their interpretations of Zenos. For “Joseph truly saw our day,” how “the Lord God would raise up a righteous branch unto the house of Israel . . . which was to be broken off” (2 Nephi 3:4–5). Nevertheless, because of the Lord’s covenant, he would remember to manifest the Messiah to them in the latter days (2 Nephi 3:3–5). Again, Lehi (through Joseph) makes specific use of the prophecies of Zenos.

NEPHI

Nephi discusses the olive allegory when his brothers complain, “We cannot understand the words which our father hath spoken concerning the natural branches of the olive-tree” (1 Nephi 15:7). Nephi had received his own version of Lehi’s vision, and he uses this understanding to provide an interpretation of the allegory (1 Nephi 15:8–19). He prefaces his explanation of the allegory of the olive tree by asking his brothers, “How is it that ye will perish, because of the hardness of your hearts?” (1 Nephi 15:10). Then he tells them that the alternative the Lord offers to perishing is knowledge of these truths, which comes to those who do not harden their hearts, but ask the Lord in faith with diligence in keeping the commandments (1 Nephi 15:11). Nephi then explains the olive tree allegory as a representation of this basic concept.

Just as Lehi had done, Nephi explains the breaking off and scattering of the natural branches both in terms of their own experience—“behold are we not broken off from the house of Israel, and are we not a branch of the house of Israel?” (1 Nephi 15:12)—and as the dwindling of the Jews in unbelief (1 Nephi 15:13). Then, when the gospel is brought to the remnant of their seed by the Gentiles, “they shall know and come to the knowledge of their forefathers, and also to the knowledge of the gospel of their Redeemer” (1 Nephi 15:14) with the result that “they shall be grafted in, being a natural branch of the olive-tree, into the true olive-tree” (1 Nephi 15:16).

In Nephi’s explanation, restored knowledge is the key to being grafted back into the true olive tree: their descendants (“the remnant of our seed”) will know “that they are of the house of Israel,” and “that they are the covenant people of the Lord.” “Then shall they know and come to the

knowledge of" their forefathers, their Redeemer, and the gospel of their Redeemer and the "very points of his doctrine, that they may know how to come unto him and be saved" (1 Nephi 15:14). Forms of the word *know* occur six times in verse 14.

The conflict between hardness of heart and faith in the Lord echoes other aspects of Zenos's allegory, with particular application to Lehi's seed. The natural branch planted in the good spot of ground became a tree with two parts, one producing tame fruit, the other producing wild fruit (Jacob 5:25). Over time, the wild part overcame the tame, which withered and died (Jacob 5:40). The Lord's servant offers an explanation: "Is it not the loftiness of thy vineyard?" The branches "grew faster than the strength of the roots, taking strength unto themselves" (Jacob 5:48). In Nephi's vision the angel gave a similar explanation of this development, if the problems of loftiness can be compared to the large and spacious building, which was "the vain imaginations and the pride of the children of men" (1 Nephi 12:18).

Once restored, the remnant of Lehi's seed will "receive the strength and nourishment from the true vine" and "come unto the true fold of God" (1 Nephi 15:15). Centuries later Alma, Amulek, and other priests began to have general success in establishing the church of Christ. Describing their success, Mormon appears to have drawn on Nephi's interpretation of Zenos: "The Lord did pour out his Spirit . . . [t]hat they might not . . . go on to destruction, but that they might receive the word with joy, and as a branch grafted into the true vine, that they might enter into the rest of the Lord their God" (Alma 16:16–17).

Nephi joins two metaphors together when, on the one hand, he speaks of being grafted "into the true olive-tree" (1 Nephi 15:16) and speaks of coming "unto the true fold"

(1 Nephi 15:15). It may be that Zenos referred to Israel also as sheep that were scattered and needed to be gathered into the true fold (1 Nephi 22:25; Helaman 15:13), as others did (see Ezekiel 34 and Jeremiah 23, 31, and 50). Nephi may also be referring to Zenos's language when he tells his brothers in 1 Nephi 22:25 that the Lord "gathereth his children from the four quarters of the earth," which echoes words Nephi attributes to Zenos in 1 Nephi 19:16. Samuel the Lamanite likewise picks up this reference to sheep in his address to the Nephites; he uses it in the same sense as Nephi and explicitly in the context of a reference to Zenos and his prophecies (Helaman 15:11, 13; cf. Alma 5:39, 60).

In his vision, Nephi "beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that it descended . . . upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth" (1 Nephi 14:14) and that "at that day, the work of the Father shall commence, in preparing the way for the fulfilling of his covenants, which he hath made to his people who are of the house of Israel" (1 Nephi 14:17). Later he explains that Lehi's speech about the olive tree referred to "all the house of Israel" and pointed "to the covenant which should be fulfilled in the latter days," which "the Lord made to our father Abraham" that in his seed "shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed" (1 Nephi 15:18; cf. Genesis 12:3). From this point on in the Book of Mormon, the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant to Israel is linked to Nephite interpretations of Zenos's allegory.

Nephi used other excerpts from Zenos to discuss his prophetic world view (in 1 Nephi 19), which suggests that Zenos may also have seen some of the things Nephi and Lehi had seen. The focus on the Abrahamic covenant is one example. Nephi quotes Zenos on this topic as follows: "Nevertheless, when that day cometh, saith the prophet,

that they no more turn aside their hearts against the Holy One of Israel, then will he remember the covenants which he made to their fathers. . . . Yea, and all the earth shall see the salvation of the Lord, saith the prophet" (1 Nephi 19:15–17). It is interesting to see how Isaiah seems to have picked up this statement from Zenos and recast it in connection with the metaphor of the Lord baring his holy arm: "The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God" (Isaiah 52:10).

Abinadi quotes Isaiah's version of this metaphor twice in his sermon (Mosiah 12:24; 15:31), but immediately backs it up with a near quotation of Zenos (Mosiah 16:1), which would make great sense if he knew Zenos to be the source of Isaiah's metaphor. The second half of Zenos's formulation, that "every nation, kindred, tongue, and people shall be blessed" (1 Nephi 19:17), is repeated frequently in the Book of Mormon (1 Nephi 5:18; 11:36; 13:40; 14:11; 22:28; 2 Nephi 26:13; 30:8; Mosiah 3:13, 20; 15:28; 16:1; 27:25; Alma 9:20; 37:4; 45:16; 3 Nephi 26:4; 28:29). These passages all refer to that last great grafting described in the olive allegory when the gospel will be taken to all peoples and the Abrahamic covenant will be fulfilled.

As noted above, Nephi explicitly attributes to Zenos the idea that the Lord will eventually gather all people of the house of Israel "from the four quarters of the earth" (1 Nephi 19:16). Book of Mormon writers use this formulation repeatedly. Nephi writes, possibly using excerpts from more of Zenos, "And he gathereth his children from the four quarters of the earth" (1 Nephi 22:25). Jacob teaches that they will "be gathered in . . . from the four parts of the earth" (2 Nephi 10:8; cf. 3 Nephi 5:24, 26; 16:5; and Ether 13:11). While references to the four parts of the earth may be

common to other ancient writings, the Book of Mormon, following Zenos, consistently uses the phrase in reference to this last gathering.

Nephi also uses Zenos's language to describe events at the time of the crucifixion of Christ. In his vision Nephi had seen

a mist of darkness on the face of the land of promise; and I saw lightnings, and I heard thunderings, and earthquakes, and all manner of tumultuous noises; and I saw the earth and the rocks, that they rent; and I saw mountains tumbling into pieces; and I saw the plains of the earth, that they were broken up; and I saw many cities that they were sunk; and I saw many that they were burned with fire; and I saw many that did tumble to the earth, because of the quaking thereof. And it came to pass after I saw these things, I saw the vapor of darkness, that it passed from off the face of the earth. (1 Nephi 12:4–5.)

Writing later about the crucifixion, Nephi quotes Zenos who similarly spoke of

three days of darkness which should be a sign given of his death unto those who should inhabit the isles of the sea, . . . who are of the house of Israel. For thus spake the prophet: The Lord God surely shall visit all the house of Israel at that day . . . with the thunderings and the lightnings of his power, by tempest, by fire, and by smoke, and vapor of darkness, and by the opening of the earth, and by mountains which shall be carried up. And all these things must surely come, saith the prophet Zenos. And the rocks of the earth must rend. (1 Nephi 19:10–12.)

Two concepts are given independently to Nephi in his vision and by Zenos in his allegory. First, the angel quotes the Lamb of God, saying, "Blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day; . . . they shall be lifted up at the last day, and shall be saved in the everlasting king-

dom of the Lamb" (1 Nephi 13:37). Similarly, Zenos writes of those who serve in the Lord's vineyard in that final restoration: "And blessed art thou; for because ye have been diligent in laboring with me in my vineyard and have kept my commandments, . . . ye shall have joy with me" (Jacob 5:75). Jacob repeats the same point (Jacob 6:3), and Mormon invokes this concept to comment on the enormous good accomplished by Ammon and his fellow missionaries when he says, "And thus we see the great call of diligence of men to labor in the vineyards of the Lord" (Alma 28:14).

Second is the construction made famous in the New Testament that emphasizes that the roles of Jews and Gentiles would be reversed. The angel told Nephi that the Lamb would manifest himself first to the Jews and then to the Gentiles, but in the end to the Gentiles first, and last to the Jews, so that "the last shall be first, and the first shall be last" (1 Nephi 13:42). Similarly, speaking of the last effort to save his vineyard, the Lord commands his servants in Zenos's parable as they prune the vineyard for the last time to "begin at the last that they may be first, and that the first may be last" and to dig about the trees, "the first and the last; and the last and the first, that all may be nourished once again for the last time" (Jacob 5:63). While the Book of Mormon also includes one example of Isaiah's use of *first* and *last* to refer to the Lord (cf. Isaiah 48:12 [1 Nephi 20:12] to Alma 11:39), all other examples of these words in the Book of Mormon follow the sense of the olive allegory.

It may also be worth noting that Nephi incorporates notions from other Zenos quotations in the passages where he interprets the olive allegory. Zenos's prophecy that Israel would despise the Holy One of Israel and would in turn "be hated among all nations" (1 Nephi 19:14) shows up when Nephi tells his brothers that the Lord "shall be rejected of

the Jews, or of the house of Israel" (1 Nephi 15:17) and that Israel "shall be scattered among all nations and shall be hated of all men" (1 Nephi 22:5).

The allegory of the olive tree uses the distinctive phrase "according to his own will and pleasure" (Jacob 5:14). Zenos uses the phrase to signal the Lord's independence of action relative to his servant and all others. Given Nephi's recent explanation of the allegory to his brothers (1 Nephi 15), it would appear to be with intentional irony that Laman turns this phrase against Nephi, accusing him of thinking "to make himself a king and a ruler over us, that he may do with us according to his will and pleasure" (1 Nephi 16:38). The rhetorical power of this accusation stems from this borrowing to make a negative judgment against Nephi, as Nephi himself had borrowed from it earlier to criticize Laman (1 Nephi 15:10). Throughout the Book of Mormon, writers invoke this phrase or its variants in one of these two ways—to signal the independence of deity in his goodness and power (2 Nephi 10:22; 25:22; Mosiah 7:33) or to show the arrogance of self-seeking men (Alma 4:8; 12:31; 17:20).

Nephi's Use of Zenos and Isaiah

First Nephi 19 contains Nephi's reflections on the process of making his record. After reviewing the technical aspects of that process, he talks about the record's purpose, "that perhaps I might persuade [my people] that they would remember the Lord their Redeemer" (1 Nephi 19:18). Nephi then turns to prophecies about the coming Christ, which he heard personally from the angel, and then briefly to prophecies from the brass plates, including an extensive quotation from Zenos (1 Nephi 19:10–17). This leads Nephi to address all the house of Israel who might read his record (1 Nephi 19:19) and to compare himself to the "prophets of

old" (19:20), who had also been shown all things (1 Nephi 19:21) concerning "those who are at Jerusalem" (1 Nephi 19:20). Nephi specifically reads to them from the books of Moses and Isaiah (19:23) and copies two chapters of Isaiah into his own record (1 Nephi 20 and 21). This movement from Zenos to Isaiah repeats the pattern of chapter 15. In both cases, having used Zenos to predict the rejection of the Messiah and the scattering of the Jews, Nephi cites Isaiah "concerning the restoration of the Jews" (1 Nephi 15:20) that they and all Israel "may have hope" (1 Nephi 19:24).

Nephi's brothers then ask him the meaning of what he has read (1 Nephi 22:1). Nephi summarizes what he intends them to see in his readings, providing us with his interpretations. While the tendency is to read this as a summary of the immediately preceding Isaiah passage, this only works well for verse 6, which speaks of Israel finally being "nursed by the Gentiles" and the Lord setting the Gentiles "up for a standard" (1 Nephi 22:6; cf. 1 Nephi 21:22–23). The rest derives mostly from the Zenos materials or Nephi's own vision: that the house of Israel will "be scattered upon all the face of the earth, and also among all nations," and "to and fro upon the isles of the sea," that they will harden their hearts against the Lord and then "be hated of all men," and that they will be restored in the last days because of the covenants of the Lord with their fathers. These points are more fully explained in the Zenos materials and only mentioned in part by Isaiah.

These passages raise a number of issues about the relationship of Zenos and Isaiah and the way their writings are used by Nephi and other Book of Mormon writers. While this is too large a topic to be treated systematically in this paper, the present study has led me to the provisional conclusion that Lehi, Nephi, and Jacob rely directly on Zenos

for support and illumination of their own revelations, and that they typically bring in Isaiah as an additional witness, but not for primary explanation. As Nephi later observes, the words of Isaiah “are plain unto all those that are filled with the spirit of prophecy” (2 Nephi 25:4). Because Isaiah appears to be aware of many of the concepts they draw from Zenos, but often tends to use them cryptically, as if his audience already knows how they fit together, we might reasonably conclude that Zenos preceded and influenced Isaiah, and that the Nephite prophets saw it that way. Thus, they see Isaiah like themselves, a beneficiary of Zenos’s prophecies and revelations who uses Zenos as they do, to help warn that portion of a rebellious Israel they have been called to teach. If this is correct, then it might be argued that Zenos is “the prophet” referred to in 1 Nephi 19:12–17; 22:2, 15, 17, and 23. Certainly most of the points summarized in the ten verses that follow that reference (1 Nephi 22:3–12) are taken from Zenos.

The Psalms of Nephi and Zenos

Alma makes clear use of a prayer written by Zenos (Alma 33:3–11) as he works with the people in Antionum, as will be discussed later. What has not been noticed is that this passage from Zenos appears to have provided some of the inspiration for the so-called “Psalm of Nephi” (2 Nephi 4:17–35), written centuries earlier by Nephi and recorded in his small plates.

While Alma quotes Zenos’s prayer as proof that Zenos knew about the Son of God and to convince the people of Antionum they could worship outside their synagogues, Nephi appears to have applied the sentiments and language of the prayer to his own trying circumstances, finding in Zenos’s words a source of encouragement and faith

in the face of hostility and affliction. Nephi ends his psalm with a prayer of approximately the same length and in a style similar to Zenos's prayer text. In their respective texts, Zenos uses the invocation "O God" or "O Lord" five times; Nephi six. Nephi begins his psalm by recognizing the Lord's great goodness in showing him "his great and marvelous works" (2 Nephi 4:17) in answer to Nephi's prayer (see 1 Nephi 11); Zenos also begins by acknowledging God's mercy in hearing his prayers (Alma 33:4). Zenos lists the many places in which the Lord heard his prayers, citing first an occasion when he was in the wilderness; Nephi lists many occasions when he received blessings from God in response to his cry and "mighty prayer," citing first how God supported him and led him through his "afflictions in the wilderness" (2 Nephi 4:20). Zenos ends by emphasizing that because the Lord did hear him in his afflictions, he will continue to cry to him "in all mine afflictions" (Alma 33:11); furthermore, Zenos asserts generally that God is "merciful unto [his] children when they cry unto [him]" (Alma 33:8); Nephi knows that "God will give liberally to him that asketh" (2 Nephi 4:35). Zenos believes the Lord listened to his prayer "because of mine afflictions and my sincerity" (Alma 33:11); Nephi expects to be blessed "because that my heart is broken and my spirit is contrite" (2 Nephi 4:32).

The most obvious similarity between the two texts is the emphasis on the help each writer sought in dealing with "[his] enemies." Nephi carries the problem to a higher level by also praying for help against the "enemy of [his] soul," who tempts him and destroys his peace, the "evil one" who seeks a place in his heart (2 Nephi 4:27–28), referring to this "enemy" three times.¹ While neither writer names these enemies directly, we get a clear picture that Nephi's enemies included his own brothers who "did seek to take away [his]

life" (2 Nephi 5:1–2), and Nephi reports that the Lord "confounded [his] enemies" (2 Nephi 4:22). While we have no background information about Zenos, it is possible that he had a somewhat different experience than Nephi. The Lord answered Zenos's prayer by turning his enemies to him (Alma 33:4). Zenos states that he had been "cast out" and "despised" by his enemies, and that upon hearing his cries the Lord was angry with them and did "visit them in [his] anger with speedy destruction" (Alma 33:10). Given the extreme difficulties Nephi had suffered with his own brothers, it is easy to see how this verse from Zenos might have attracted his close attention.

Finally, both Nephi and Zenos make direct reference to the Atonement of Christ and the joy they can find through it. Zenos explains God's mercy in terms of the Son and recognizes that it is "because of [God's] Son" that "[God has] turned [his] judgments away from [him]" (Alma 33:11). Nephi asks himself why he should be depressed or feel such sorrow when "the Lord in his condescension unto the children of men hath visited men in so much mercy" (2 Nephi 4:26; cf. 1 Nephi 11:16–25). Both end their prayers by announcing the joy they receive from the Lord's mercy to them in their afflictions. Zenos says, "In thee is my joy" (Alma 33:11), while Nephi enjoins his heart to rejoice and cry to the Lord, saying, "My soul will rejoice in thee, my God, and the rock of my salvation" (2 Nephi 4:30).

Nephi's Conclusions

After inserting many more chapters of Isaiah, Nephi assembles a long summary of prophecies and teachings for his descendants (2 Nephi 25–30). This is at least the fourth time Nephi has undertaken this exercise, and it follows his familiar pattern. In this summary, we find Nephi drawing

on the same sources, but in a way that tends to emphasize his own visions and, to some extent, the prophecies of Isaiah. Still, some of the distinctive Zenos material shows up, especially in its interpreted forms, in what is a simplified and homogenized product. Some phrases from Zenos appear for the first time and in ways that show they have been fully incorporated into Nephi's own normal speech.

Nephi begins again by referring to the recurring destruction of the Jews because of their iniquities and the hardening of their hearts (2 Nephi 25:9–10). Nephi knows they will be carried captive and restored to the land of their inheritance. When the Only Begotten manifests himself to them, they will reject him, because of the hardness of their hearts, and crucify him. For this the Jews will be “scattered among all nations and scourged by other nations until they come “to believe in Christ” (2 Nephi 25:11–16). The Lord will eventually restore his words to them to convince “them of the true Messiah, who was rejected by them.” The writings of Nephi and others’ will be preserved and handed down, so that the seed of Joseph should “never perish . . . according to the will and pleasure of God” (2 Nephi 25:18, 21–22).

Nephi gives a specific account of what will happen when the Messiah comes to the Nephites. His appearance will be preceded by calamities marking his death, as described by Zenos (2 Nephi 26:3–6; cf. 1 Nephi 19:10–12). Even though three righteous generations will result from his visit, the fourth will “yield to the devil” and go down to destruction. Nephi describes his personal response to this by using the words that Zenos attributes to the Lord each time he had to destroy the corrupt branches: “This grieveth my soul” (2 Nephi 26:11; cf. Jacob 5:7, 11, 13, 32, 46–47, 51,

and 66). But even after they “have dwindled in unbelief,” the Lord will not forget them (2 Nephi 26:15–16).

Chapter 29 records a revelation that Nephi seems almost to be receiving at the moment he is writing. This revelation begins with, but develops much further, familiar concepts and phrases from both Isaiah and Zenos. Nephi prophesies that the Lord will “remember [his] covenants” and will send the words of the Nephite prophets “to the ends of the earth, for a standard unto my people, which are of the house of Israel” (2 Nephi 29:1–2). The Gentiles do not appreciate God’s “ancient covenant people,” the Jews, who have given them the Bible. Rather they have cursed and hated them. The Lord asks the Gentiles if there are not more nations than one. He created all men; he remembers those on the isles of the sea; and he will bring his word forth to “all the nations of the earth” (2 Nephi 29:4–7). The Lord speaks “according to his own pleasure,” and his “work is not yet finished.” And finally, his people, “which are of the house of Israel, shall be gathered home unto the lands of their possessions,” and he will show the world that he “covenanted with Abraham that [he] would remember his seed forever” (2 Nephi 29:9, 14).

Nephi explains that the Gentiles can become part of the house of Israel. In Zenos this is the grafting in of the wild branches. Nephi says, “As many of the Gentiles as will repent are the covenant people of the Lord; and as many of the Jews as will not repent shall be cast off,” for the Lord will only covenant “with them that repent and believe in his Son” (2 Nephi 30:2). The gospel of Jesus Christ will come forth to the Gentiles and then to the remnant of Lehi, through the book Nephi has described. Thus will they be “restored unto the knowledge of their fathers, and also to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, which was had among their

fathers." They will rejoice and become a "delightful people." And the scattered Jews will also begin to believe in Christ and be gathered and become a "delightful people" (2 Nephi 30:5–7). The emphasis on delightful people reminds us of the Lord's delight or joy in the precious natural fruit (which these believing Israelites are) in Zenos's allegory (Jacob 5:71, 75). The connection is picked up and repeated by Mormon who prays that his brethren "may once again come to the knowledge of God, yea, the redemption of Christ; that they may once again be a delightful people" (Words of Mormon 1:8).

Nephi foresees that the Lord will "commence his work among all nations, kindreds, tongues and people." At the end, the Lord will "cause a great division among the people, and the wicked will he destroy; and he will spare his people, yea, even if it so be that he must destroy the wicked by fire" (2 Nephi 30:8, 10). This is a paraphrase of the final verse of the allegory of the olive tree (Jacob 5:77). At that day, Nephi informs us, "Satan shall have power over the hearts of the children of men no more" (2 Nephi 30:18), another point taken from Zenos (1 Nephi 22:15, 26).

JACOB

Nephi introduces Jacob first as a teacher and interpreter of Isaiah. Jacob's sermon recorded in 2 Nephi 6–10 reiterates the verses of Isaiah 49 that Nephi had also used, along with references to Zenos (see Isaiah 49:22–26; 1 Nephi 22:6; 2 Nephi 6:6–7). Like Nephi, Jacob supplements his account of the prophecies from the brass plates with insights drawn from his own visions, for the Lord showed Jacob the captivity and eventual return of those who were at Jerusalem, as well as his own future ministry and crucifixion (2 Nephi 6:8–9).

Jacob's vision, like Nephi's before him, is reported in wording that may be associated with Zenos. "After they have hardened their hearts" they will be "smitten and afflicted." Because of the prayers of the faithful, they will not be allowed to perish but will be scattered, smitten, and hated. But in the end, the Lord will be merciful so that "when they shall come to the knowledge of their Redeemer," they will be gathered, and "the Lord God "will fulfill his covenants" to them (2 Nephi 6:10–12). Jacob completes this summary in mostly Isaianic terms and then quotes two chapters of Isaiah (50:1–52:2). Again we see the pattern established by Nephi in which Isaiah is invoked as an additional witness and illuminator of prophecies based on Zenos and the Nephite prophets' own visions.

After the Isaiah reading, Jacob again returns to concepts that he may have found in Zenos. Because of "the covenants of the Lord that he has covenanted with all the house of Israel," they will "be restored to the true church and fold of God." In a distinctive formulation that recalls the plurality of "the nethermost parts of [the Lord's] vineyard," Jacob interprets those covenants to mean that all Israel will "be gathered home to the lands of their inheritance" and will "be established in all their lands of promise" (2 Nephi 9:1–2). At the end of the sermon, Jacob reiterates the themes of the Lord's covenants and mercy, the promise that their seed should never be utterly destroyed, but that in the future they would "become a righteous branch unto the house of Israel" (2 Nephi 9:53).

The next chapter continues Jacob's speech on the main themes of the covenant history and future of the house of Israel, which Zenos also addressed, as well as more specifically their own "righteous branch" (2 Nephi 10:1). Jacob has been shown that many of their descendants would perish

“because of unbelief.” But many will be restored by coming to “the true knowledge of their Redeemer” (2 Nephi 10:2). Although after the crucifixion they will suffer famines, pestilences, and bloodshed, and those not destroyed will “be scattered among all nations” (2 Nephi 10:6), when they come to believe in Christ, God will restore them to the lands of their inheritance, according to his covenant “with their fathers” (2 Nephi 10:7–8). Like Nephi, Jacob emphasizes the prominent role to be played by the Gentiles who “shall be great in the eyes” of God in carrying gathered Israel “in from their long dispersion” to “the lands of their inheritance” (2 Nephi 10:8; cf. 1 Nephi 15:13–14, 17). In closing his sermon, Jacob recognizes that this is a “choice land” and that they have been led there by the Lord. It is an isle of the sea, and (as in Zenos, see 1 Nephi 19:16) there are others of “our brethren” that are scattered upon the isles of the sea. The Lord remembers all “who have been broken off” because he has led them “away from time to time from the house of Israel, according to his will and pleasure” (2 Nephi 10:19–22; cf. Jacob 5:14).

When Jacob presents the allegory itself in Jacob 4–6, what begins as an explanation of the present record (Jacob 4:1) turns quickly into a testimony of the coming of Christ and a warning to Jacob’s people to be humble and receptive to this truth. Jacob encountered a great deal of opposition from some who thought the law of Moses was all they needed (Jacob 4:5; 7:6–7). It appears that part of his problem was that the writings of the Jews are not as plain in this regard as the revelations he, Nephi, and Lehi had received (Jacob 4:14), so he undertakes to explain scripturally how the Jews who do not accept the revelations about Christ will stumble and fall. He refers to Isaiah’s statements that the Lord would be a stone of stumbling to both houses of Israel,

as they would fail to see him as their only sure foundation (Isaiah 8:14; 28:16). Following the pattern we have seen earlier, Jacob looks to Zenos for the explanation of things stated too cryptically or mysteriously in Isaiah (Jacob 4:18). The teachings of Zenos come naturally to mind as Jacob speaks of “the perfect knowledge of [Christ]” as the means by which one can benefit from the Atonement and also speaks of the expectation that the Jews “will reject the stone upon which they might build” (Jacob 4:12, 15), and as he urges the people to come to Christ that they might qualify to “be presented as the first-fruits of Christ unto God” (Jacob 4:11). That Jacob is drawing on Zenos at this point is dramatically emphasized by his insertion into his own brief record of Zenos’s entire olive allegory (Jacob 5).

In chapter 4, Jacob teaches that people should “seek not to counsel the Lord, but to take counsel from his hand” (Jacob 4:10). The doctrine appears to be the same as the Lord’s injunction to his servant in the olive allegory when he says, “Counsel me not; I knew that it was a poor spot of ground; wherefore, I said unto thee, I have nourished it this long time, and thou beholdest that it hath brought forth much fruit” (Jacob 5:22).²

After reading the full allegory to his brethren, Jacob turns immediately to an extended interpretation in the form of a prophecy of his own (Jacob 6:1). Unlike the more historically oriented interpretations of Lehi and Nephi, Jacob moves directly to the implications for individuals. Jacob notes first how blessed those will be who labor diligently in the vineyard and how cursed are those who will be cast out. The world is the vineyard, and it “will be burned with fire.” For Jacob, the mercy of God is evidenced in the way he remembers the house of Israel, both roots and branches, all who “will not harden their hearts shall be saved in the

kingdom of God" (Jacob 6:3–4). The allegory is a parable of salvation for individuals as well as for peoples. Thus, Jacob calls individuals to repent and come to God: "Hear his voice," and "harden not your hearts" (Jacob 6:5–6). Using the language of the allegory, Jacob identifies the nourishment given to the tree as "the good word of God" and reminds his hearers that if they bring forth evil fruit, they will "be hewn down and cast into the fire." To reject that nourishment is to "reject the words of the prophets . . . concerning Christ." It is to "deny the good word of Christ, and the power of God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost." The burning awaiting those who do this is "that lake of fire and brimstone," which is "endless torment" (Jacob 6:7–10).

At the end of Zenos's allegory the bad fruit is "cast away into its own place" (Jacob 5:77). Jacob emphasizes the magnitude of this penalty upon wicked individuals by saying, "How cursed are they who shall be cast out into their own place" (Jacob 6:3). He then clarifies that because "justice cannot be denied," these offenders "must go away into that lake of fire and brimstone, whose flames are unquenchable, and whose smoke ascendeth up forever and ever, which lake of fire and brimstone is endless torment" (Jacob 6:10). This notion is paralleled in the revelation of John (Revelation 19:20; 20:14–15, 20) and in the writings of Nephi, who saw the same revelation (1 Nephi 14:24–27) and used the same phrase when he said of the wicked that "they must go into the place prepared for them, even a lake of fire and brimstone, which is endless torment" (2 Nephi 28:23). Thus it may well be that Nephi was the source of this language for Book of Mormon peoples (1 Nephi 14:24–28; cf. Jacob 3:11, Mosiah 2:37–39; Alma 12:17; 14:14). Alternatively, Zenos might also have been a source.

BENJAMIN

King Benjamin is a prophet who about four hundred years later used some of the same language as that used by Zenos, Lehi, Nephi, and Jacob. The influence of Zenos is present here, but fainter. The prophetic words of the angel to Benjamin echo Zenos and his Nephite interpreters: "The time shall come when the knowledge of a Savior shall spread throughout every nation, kindred, tongue, and people" (Mosiah 3:20). Echoing Jacob, Benjamin warns his people that if they transgress and "withdraw [them]selves from the Spirit of the Lord" they cannot be "blessed, prospered, and preserved" (Mosiah 2:36; cf. Jacob 6:8). Turning again to the fate of the wicked, he says they "are consigned to an awful view of their own guilt and abominations," a state of "endless torment" that "is as a lake of fire and brimstone, whose flames are unquenchable, and whose smoke ascendeth up forever and ever" (Mosiah 3:25, 27). Benjamin shows his people the consequences of having "come to a knowledge of the goodness of God," which will bring them salvation if they continue in faith to the end of their lives (Mosiah 4:5, 6). With this knowledge they cannot dwindle in unbelief but rather will "believe in God; believe that he is, . . . and again, believe that [they] must repent" (Mosiah 4:9–10).

ALMA

While Alma sometimes borrows from Zenos directly, even quoting from the brass plates, his sermons are not as dominated by Zenos's prophecies and allegory as are those of Nephi and Jacob. He concludes his great Zarahemla sermon, however, with images from Zenos's allegory, with the warning that "every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be hewn down and cast into the fire, . . . even an

unquenchable fire" (Alma 5:52, 56). This is his warning to the Nephites who are "puffed up in the pride of [their] hearts" (Alma 5:53). In his final appeal to the people of Zarahemla, he explains how the Nephites have received the "tidings of great joy" in plainness "in all parts of our vineyard," and that it has been declared among all the Lord's people "that are scattered abroad upon the face of the earth" (Alma 13:22–23).

Describing the mission of Alma and Amulek, Mormon draws even more directly on Zenos, explaining how the Lord prepared the hearts and minds of the people by pouring his Spirit out on them, "that they might not be unbelieving, and go on to destruction, but that they might receive the word with joy, and as a branch be grafted into the true vine" (Alma 16:16–17). Ammon rejoices that God "has been mindful of this people, who are a branch of the tree of Israel, and has been lost from its body in a strange land" (Alma 26:36; cf. Alma 13:23).

In his mission to the Zoramites, Alma turns extensively to Zenos as a source of his teachings. Not only does he quote the prayer of Zenos to show how people can pray without access to a synagogue (Alma 33:2–11), he goes on to point out that Zenos was a witness of "the Son of God" through whom redemption would come (Alma 33:13–14; 34:7). But perhaps Alma's most impressive use of Zenos is in Alma's allegory of the seed and tree of life (Alma 32:28–43). In this passage, Alma adapts language that appears to come from Zenos to create an allegory of individual salvation. That Alma follows his analogy with the long quotation from Zenos on the subject of prayer reinforces the relationship of his allegory in Alma 32 to Zenos's. Alma invites his hearers to plant the word as a seed in their hearts and not to "cast it out by [their] unbelief" (Alma

32:28). The sprouting and growing of the seed then gives the experimenter knowledge that it is good (verses 33–35). As it grows one must “nourish it with great care” and not let it wither away so that it must be plucked up and cast out (verses 37–38). But if one will “nourish the word” with “great diligence” he will be able to harvest the fruit, “which is most precious” (verses 33–42).

SAMUEL

In prophesying to the Nephites, the Lamanite prophet Samuel explicitly cites Zenos “concerning the restoration of our brethren, the Lamanites, again to the knowledge of the truth” (Helaman 15:11). For “even if they should dwindle in unbelief,” he says, the Lord will “prolong their days.” “In the latter times the promises of the Lord” will be extended to them. And even though they are “scattered abroad,” the Lord will be merciful to them. All this is “according to the prophecy” that they will again “be brought to the true knowledge, which is the knowledge of their Redeemer, and their great and true shepherd, and be numbered among his sheep.” Just as Lehi had blessed this people as a whole, because their dwindling in unbelief was caused by the traditions of their fathers, Samuel promises that the Lord “will not utterly destroy them” (Helaman 15:12–16).

MORMON AND MORONI

The language and concepts of Zenos were remembered and used by Book of Mormon writers down to the end of Nephite history. Mormon’s final appeal to the future descendants of the Lamanites is couched at least partially in language that was similar to that of Zenos. Mormon informs them that they are a “remnant of the house of Israel” (Mormon 7:1), that they must repent and “come to

the knowledge of [their] fathers," and "believe in Jesus Christ." Through Mormon's record they will come to know that they "are a remnant of the seed of Jacob," and that they "are numbered among the people of the first covenant." Believing in Christ will be the first step in preparing them to be in good standing at the day of judgment (Mormon 7:4–10).

Moroni's report of the prophecy of Ether also bears the signs of Zenos's influence on Nephite writers. Moroni noted particularly that Ether saw his land as a land choice "above all other lands" (Ether 13:2). Furthermore, Ether had seen that the seed of Joseph would be brought to this land "that they should perish not." Eventually the blessings of the New Jerusalem would come to "the remnant of the seed of Joseph, who were of the house of Israel." And the rest of Israel who "were scattered and gathered" from "the four quarters of the earth" would partake in the fulfillment of "the covenant which God made with their father, Abraham," bringing to pass the scripture that says, "there are they who were first, who shall be last; and there are they who were last, who shall be first" (Ether 13:7–12).³

CONCLUSIONS

It is inherent in this kind of study, because of assumptions that must be made in linking texts, that few conclusions can be reached beyond doubt. Assuming that Zenos was a prophet to Israel before the time of Isaiah and that his writings were available to the Nephites in the brass plates, we can find many probable connections to those writings in Nephite prophecy. The general pattern of Nephite reliance on Zenos seems to have been established early, as Lehi, Nephi, and Jacob borrowed language and images from Zenos in expressing their own revelations. The language

and phraseology of these interpretations are found repeatedly in the writings of Nephite prophets and appear to be textually dependent on these early passages. The early Nephite prophets also seem to view Isaiah as doing the same thing: They assumed Zenos as a basic, shared text and used Isaiah's references to Zenos's prophecies as further witnesses of their own revelations and interpretations of Zenos. Though quite tentative, it is easiest to make sense of the relationships between these materials by assuming that Zenos was prior to and known by Isaiah.

Nephite use of Zenos was not limited to the olive allegory but included other Zenos sources as well. While the olive allegory treats the house of Israel as an entity that bears fruit for the Lord, other Zenos references focus more on the individual who can inherit the precious fruit of the tree of life, which is eternal life, as also appears in the tree of life allegories of Lehi, Nephi, and Alma. Although Nephite reliance on Zenos is most extensive in the earliest generation, echoes continue down to the end of Nephite prophecy.

Notes

1. Zenos may well have been the prophet that Nephi had earlier quoted to show that "the time speedily cometh that Satan shall have no more power over the hearts of the children of men" (1 Nephi 22:15, 26).

2. However, because the wording Jacob uses to develop the concept (Jacob 5:8–10) is so similar to Paul's treatment of the same subject (Romans 11:33–36) in conjunction with his own reflections on the olive allegory (Romans 11:14–25), one is led to wonder whether both might not be drawing on a more extended statement by Zenos not preserved in either the Bible or the Book of Mormon. Both passages refer to the creation, to the greatness of God's *wisdom* and the fact that his *ways* are not known to man, and that God's judgments or the depths of his mysteries are *unsearchable*. While there are some similarities between Romans 11 and some of Isaiah's references to the counsel of the Lord (see especially Isaiah 11:2 and 28:9), none of these

reflect the broad similarities found in the comparison with Jacob, again, in double connection with the Zenos allegory.

3. It is worth noting in passing that the vision of Enoch revealed to Joseph Smith may provide a source older than both Zenos and the Jaredite records, which would link some key Zenos phrases to the New Jerusalem (see Moses 7:62).

4

Jacob 5 in the Nineteenth Century

Grant Underwood

In the Church's first periodical, *The Evening and the Morning Star*, editor W. W. Phelps occasionally published excerpts from the Book of Mormon. On one occasion, he reprinted in its entirety what today is Jacob 5 and offered these words of introduction:

One of the greatest figures, one of the plainest parables, and sublimest prophecies, that we know of, is found in the book of Jacob in the book of Mormon. It is as simple as the accents of a child, and as sublime as the language of an angel. The words are from the mouth of an ancient prophet named Zenos, and would to God we had all his prophetic book, for he that caused Isaiah's lips to be touched with sacred fire, filled Zenos with the word of wisdom. Isaiah said [Isaiah 5:7], The vineyard of the Lord of hosts, is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant, and Zenos adorns it with the tame olive tree for the children of Israel, and grafts in the wild olive, for the Gentiles; and marvel not that the Lord is now sending his servants to prune this vineyard for the last time.¹

Throughout the nineteenth century, those who mentioned Zenos's prophecy, or "parable" as they usually called it, did so with the same admiration reflected in Phelps's comments. Erastus Snow, for instance, called it a "notable

parable,” and Orson Pratt, who discussed it a number of times in conference talks, described it as “a very important and extensive parable.”² Such enthusiasm, however, needs to be placed in context. While the Book of Mormon was treasured in the early years, the surviving documentary record indicates that it simply was not quoted or discussed with anything near the frequency of the Bible.³ A search of numerous books, diaries, and periodicals from the nineteenth century reveals that even Zenos’s parable, highly regarded as it was, drew comments numbering only in the dozens rather than the hundreds, as was the case with some biblical passages, and that many of the comments came from Orson Pratt. By almost a five-to-one margin, Pratt cited Jacob 5 more often than any other Latter-day Saint speaker or writer. This was probably due to the fact that his experience in the 1870s of versifying and footnoting the Book of Mormon afforded him an unusually in-depth appreciation of the volume’s contents. Overall, nineteenth-century discussion of the parable can be divided into two broad categories—historical and homiletical.

HISTORICAL

The most obvious reading of Jacob 5 was as an account of God’s dealings with Israel and the Gentiles. It offered a considerable elaboration of the Israel-Gentiles-Israel periodization of redemptive history found in the Bible. In particular, it bore detailed and dramatic testimony to the latter-day gathering of Israel. Jacob himself introduced the parable as the “unfold[ing]” of the “mystery” of how the Jews, “after having rejected the sure foundation, can ever build upon it, that it may become the head of their corner” (Jacob 4:15–18). Since the restoration of Israel figured prominently in early Mormon doctrine, it is not surprising that

this parable should have caught the Saints' attention. To fully appreciate the Latter-day Saint position, one must see it set against a brief history of Christian interpretation of prophecy pertaining to Israel's latter-day glory.⁴

For a thousand years prior to the Reformation, the Augustinian formulation prevailed wherein the Christian church was seen allegorically as spiritual Israel and the fulfiller of all Old Testament prophecies. This interpretation obviated the need for any special work among historic Israel. During the Reformation, however, efforts to restore a literal hermeneutic to prophetic interpretation surfaced and occasionally gained center stage. Particularly among some of Calvin's followers, prophecies and statements dealing with Israel and Zion came to be understood at face value. Thus, the apostle Paul's promise that one day "all Israel shall be saved" (Romans 11:25–26) was taken literally to refer to scattered Jews. A leading historian of the matter has argued that when Calvinist theologians reinterpreted the phrase "all Israel" to mean the Jewish people rather than taking it to be a symbolic reference to the church, Christian Zionism was born.⁵ Combined with a renewed interest in the prophecies and prophetic numbers of Daniel and Revelation, such approaches led unprecedented numbers of people to expect a national conversion of the Jews before the Second Coming.⁶

At first, many held to the "calling" of the Jews but not to their physical return to Israel.⁷ The latter smacked too much of the old "carnal millennium" anathematized by early church Fathers.⁸ However, voices began to be heard in its favor. One of the earliest was Sergeant Henry Finch, the London lawyer, who found himself jailed for several weeks because he described the future political supremacy of the restored Jewish kingdom a little too enthusiastically for the

king's tastes.⁹ By the time Increase Mather delivered his famous sermon, "The Mystery of Israel's Salvation," the idea of a "temporal" restoration was commonplace among certain students of biblical prophecy.¹⁰

Latter-day Saints, however, aided by the Book of Mormon, saw the whole issue of Israel's restoration on a much broader scale. For them, more than just the Jews were involved. The ten tribes still had to return, and the American Indians, too, were considered a "remnant of Jacob." They could even include themselves among God's covenant people by stressing their own patriarchally pronounced pedigree. Zenos's parable provided a detailed and sweeping review of redemptive history that matched the Saints' expansive vision. Though by present standards, there was relatively little nineteenth-century discussion of, let alone full-fledged commentary on, Jacob 5, a framework for discerning early Mormon understandings can be gleaned from two important sources. The first was an "index," which really amounted to a table of contents, prepared by Brigham Young and Willard Richards for the 1841 European edition of the Book of Mormon.¹¹ The second was the set of footnotes provided by Orson Pratt for the 1879 edition of the Book of Mormon.¹² Preparing a table of contents, and especially a series of textual glosses or footnotes, is an obvious act of interpretation. Both by what these men chose to include or exclude, as well as by the very manner in which they worded their entries, a valuable window into early Mormon minds is provided.

Young and Richards made seven sequential entries for Jacob 5: "Tame olive tree," "nethermost part of the vineyard," "fruit laid up against the season," "wild fruit had overcome," "Lord of the vineyard wept," "branches overcome the roots," and "wild branches plucked off." As late

as the 1906 edition of the Book of Mormon, these entries remained unchanged as part of that volume's table of contents, though one additional reference—"another branch"—had been inserted before "wild fruit had overcome." Why these particular phrases might have been considered significant and how they, along with other passages, might have been understood can be glimpsed by reviewing Pratt's interpretive glosses as well as relevant comments from other Saints.

The parable begins by detailing what happens when the Lord attempts to save the decaying "tame olive tree," Israel, by transferring some of its "young and tender branches" to the "nethermost parts of the vineyard," while at the same time grafting into the main stock branches from the "wild olive tree," the Gentiles. Few portions of Jacob 5 aroused more interpretive speculation than the identity and whereabouts of those "natural branches" that the Lord "hid" in "the nethermost parts of the vineyard" (Jacob 5:14). Orson Pratt's gloss on this verse identified them as the "Ten tribes in the North. Some of Judah and Joseph in America. Others upon isles."

Actually such ideas date back to the earliest years. A *Times and Seasons* article quoted several passages mentioning branches in the "nethermost parts" and remarked, "From the above, it is very evident that there did exist other branches of the house of Israel, that were under the special guidance of the Lord, and to whom he paid peculiar attention, and that in order that he might preserve a pure seed unto himself." What caught the author's attention in particular was Zenos's description "that these branches were *hid* [Jacob 5:14, 20] in the vineyard, and consequently not generally known by the generality of mankind." Examples of such branches included the ten tribes who were, citing

2 Esdras, "taken to a 'land where never mankind dwelt, from whence they will return in the latter day,' " Lehi and his family who "came to this continent," "a remnant of the house of Israel, somewhere on the Islands of the sea," and even "a number of the house of Israel discovered in little Thibet in the interior of China, in a highly civilized state, a few years ago." Thus, the *Times and Seasons* concluded, "We have now found out several of the hiding places of the branches of the house of Israel . . . according to the account given in the Book of Mormon."¹³

Descriptions of one of the trees being planted in a "good spot" that was "choice above all others" were easy to interpret, especially when, as noted in verse 25, "part of the tree" brought forth "good fruit" and part "wild fruit." Pratt identified these in his footnotes as "Nephites" and "Lamanites" and the spot as "America." He also suggested the "Jaredites" as "that which cumbered" the good spot of ground and had to be "cut down" so that the Lehite colony could be planted (Jacob 5:44). A subsequent visit of the Lord and his servant disclosed that "the wild fruit . . . had overcome that part of the tree which brought forth good fruit, even that the branch had withered away and died" (Jacob 5:40). It did not require much imagination to see in this the destruction of the Nephites by the Lamanites.

In a piece for the *Star* entitled "The Ten Tribes," W. W. Phelps traced "Israel to Assyria, where he is figuratively declared by Hosea [Hosea 8:8–9] to be a wild ass alone by himself, and where he has remained in complete obscurity from the world, 2556 years." He then cited Jacob 5:19–22 and remarked, "Here we have a clue to the place where Israel is; for while standing upon the centre of the earth, it would be perfectly natural to call the north, south, east, and west, nethermost, or lowest; and as this branch was the first

that the Lord had hid, it would evidently mean the ten tribes as they were the first carried away."¹⁴

Mention of "natural branches" being "hid" in the "nethermost part of the vineyard," which also happened to be the "poorest spot" seemed to coincide perfectly with contemporary notions about the lost ten tribes having been sequestered away to the frozen "north countries." Phelps elaborated on this theme several years later in a letter to Oliver Cowdery. He declared:

The parts of the globe that are known probably contain 700 millions of inhabitants, and those parts which are unknown may be supposed to contain more than four times as many more, making an estimated total of about *three thousand, five hundred and eighty million souls*; Let no man marvel at this statement, because there may be a continent at the north pole, of more than 1300 square miles, containing thousands of millions of Israelites, who, after a highway is cast up in the great deep, may come to Zion, singing songs of everlasting joy. . . . This idea is greatly strengthened by reading Zenos' account of the tame olive tree in the Book of Mormon. The branches planted in the nethermost parts of the earth, "brought forth much fruit," and no man that pretends to have pure religion, can find "much fruit" among the Gentiles, or heathen of this generation.¹⁵

This latter idea that the Gentiles had failed to bring forth "fruit" points to the Saints' understanding of what resulted from the ingrafting of the "wild branches." Zenos mentioned that initially they had begun "to bear fruit" (Jacob 5:17), which Pratt explained as "the Gentiles in the Apostles' day." When "a long time had passed away" (Jacob 5:29)—"eighteen hundred years" according to Pratt—the Lord and his servant returned to find that "all sorts of fruit did cumber the tree" (Jacob 5:30). These Pratt

understood as the modern "sects of Christendom." Brigham Young and Willard Richards also drew attention to this phenomenon by citing a verse describing how the Gentile branches had "overcome the roots" (Jacob 5:48).

The Gentile apostasy was an important part of the Saints' periodization of redemptive history. Joseph Smith explained that sequence in a letter to the *American Revivalist and Rochester Observer*. After the Jews "had rejected Christ and his proposals, the heralds of salvation said to them, 'Lo, we turn unto the Gentiles;' and the Gentiles received the covenant and were grafted in from whence the chosen family were broken off." However, invoking a Romans 11 phrase popular with the early Saints, he noted that "the Gentiles have not continued in the goodness of God [Romans 11:22] but have departed from the faith that was once delivered to the Saints."¹⁶ Orson Pratt elaborated: "The Gentiles, since they were grafted in, 1800 years ago, have fallen after the same example of unbelief that the ancient Jews did, and they have lost the power and authority which they once possessed; and for many centuries they have had no apostles, no prophets, no angels from heaven, no power of godliness made manifest among them, and nothing but the teachings and precepts of uninspired men."¹⁷ As Orson Hyde summed it up in his *Prophetic Warning*, "Nothing is more plain than that the Gentiles have not continued in the goodness of God; but have departed from the faith and purity of the gospel."¹⁸

With universal apostasy in evidence, the Lord of the vineyard declares, "Now all the trees of my vineyard are good for nothing save it be to be hewn down and cast into the fire" (Jacob 5:42). The servant persuades him to labor a while longer in the vineyard, but ultimately the final pruning to which Young and Richards drew attention takes place

wherein “the wild branches began to be plucked off” (Jacob 5:73). In his letter to the *American Revivalist*, Joseph Smith asked, “Has not the pride, high-mindedness, and unbelief of the Gentiles provoked the holy one of Israel to withdraw his holy spirit from them and send forth his Judgments to scourge them for their wickedness; this is certainly the case.” “Distruction [*sic*],” he wrote, “to the eye of the spiritual beholder seemes to be writen by the finger of an invisible hand in Large capitals upon almost evry thing we behold.”¹⁹ Wilford Woodruff did not mince words when he described the plight of unbelieving Gentiles:

In vain, in vain, do ye strive O! ye gentiles for this thing. Ye are ownly fuel for the fire & tinder for the Breath of the Almighty. Ye have not continued in the goodness of God neither have ye sought to recover Israel. WO, WO, WO, unto you Rome for you are the mother of harlets & Wo unto all your daughters England & America not excepted. Your destruction is sure. Your condemnation lingereth not & your Damnation Slumbereth not. For you are all drunk with the Blood of Saints. You have spoiled Judah & Ephram you have trodden down. But he will rise again & fullfill the word of God on thee!²⁰

Individuals as well as nations were singled out for the pruning. In the midst of tension with the U.S. government in the 1850s, Brigham Young declared, “I have just as good a right to say that President [Zachary] Taylor is in hell, as to say that any other miserable sinner is there. Was he any more than flesh and blood? I have as good a right to canvass him in a religious point of view, as I have to canvass the peasant upon the dunghill. He has gone there, and so have many others; and the Lord Almighty is removing the bitter branches, as foretold in the Book of Mormon.”²¹ It should be pointed out that the Saints did not categorically condemn all

Gentiles. Pratt identified the “most bitter” branches destined to be plucked off as only “the more wicked portions of the Gentiles.” According to Zenos, other branches, wild but not so bitter, were to be spared and grafted in elsewhere with the hope that the Lord “may yet have glory in the fruit of [his] vineyard” (Jacob 5:54). Still, the general corruption of the Gentile religious world was a necessary precursor to the final phase of the Lord’s redemptive work. As Paul explained it in an oft-quoted verse, once the “the fulness of the Gentiles” was “come in,” then “all Israel shall be saved” (Romans 11:25–26). The phrase “fulness of the Gentiles be come in” was often taken to mean the gathering of the full measure of the Gentile elect. For some, however, such as Sidney Rigdon, the apocalyptic perception of a world beyond repair overpowered any optimism about Gentile converts and led to an interpretation of the “fulness” of the Gentiles as the *apostasy* of the Gentiles. “When *will* the fulness of the Gentiles be come in?” asked Rigdon. “When they all shall have ceased to bring forth the fruits of the kingdom of heaven, of all parties, sects, and denominations, and not one of them standing in the situation in which God had placed them; . . . then is the time that the world may prepare themselves to see the God of heaven set his hand the second time to recover the remnant of his people.”²²

The apostasy was more than just evidence that truth and authority had been lost. It demonstrated that the stage was set for the Lord to perform his latter-day work of re-grafting the natural branches. The prophetic chronology seemed clear—the Gentiles apostatize, the Israelites are gathered, and the Millennium is ushered in. Orson Pratt taught that

When the Gentile nations shall reject this Gospel, and count themselves unworthy of eternal life, as the Jews did

before them, the Lord will say. "It is enough, come away from them, my servants, I will give you a new commission, you shall go to the scattered remnants of the house of Israel. I will gather them in from the four quarters of the earth, and bring them again into their own lands. They shall build Jerusalem on its own heap; they shall rear a Temple on the appointed place in Palestine, and they shall be grafted in again." Now that, in short, is the nature of this great latter-day preparatory work for the coming of the Son of Man.²³

Not surprisingly, the Saints saw themselves at the center of this final labor. "The latter part of [Zenos's] extensive parable," declared Pratt "more particularly relates to the great work which we, as Latter-day Saints, are now performing in the earth."²⁴ The "servant" and "other servants" (Jacob 5:70) called to perform the final pruning and grafting were none other than "Joseph Smith" and "those called through Joseph Smith."²⁵ W. W. Phelps declared, "All men, acquainted with revelation and the spirit of God, have agreed that the 'servant' spoken of in that parable, was Joseph Smith."²⁶ Parley Pratt remarked, "I have often been reminded by the faithful laborers in this Church . . . of the parable in the Book of Mormon that these latter-day laborers should be called to prune the vineyard of the Lord." In his mind, the prophetic parable was included in the Book of Mormon so "that we might see and understand how it was that the great work of the last days was to be fulfilled." He asked, "Is it not being fulfilled every whit? Have not the eleventh hour laborers been called? Are not their numbers few [Jacob 5:70]? And have they not labored with all their might, many of them [Jacob 5:71–72]? Verily I say unto you, yea."²⁷

In the closing verses of Jacob 5, the servants are described as "diligent in laboring" in the vineyard and con-

sequently are able to bring “again the natural fruit, that [the] vineyard is no more corrupted, and the bad is cast away” (Jacob 5:75). As a result, the Lord is able to “lay up unto [himself] of the fruit, for a long time” (Jacob 5:76). The “long time” Pratt understood as a reference to the Millennium. The very last verse carries history to the end by commenting on a future time in which “evil fruit shall again come into my vineyard,” though ultimately the “good” will be preserved and the “bad” “cast away into its own place,” and the vineyard “burned with fire.” The interpretation offered by Pratt was that this referred to Satan’s being loosed for a little season at the end of the Millennium followed by the ultimate transformation of the earth.

HOMILETICAL

Some use of Jacob 5 in the nineteenth century seems to have been primarily homiletical in nature. In such instances, it was not the overall message of the restoration of Israel that was of concern but rather individual passages or phrases that seemed relevant to whatever point the speaker happened to be making. For instance, Heber C. Kimball found the exchange between the master of the vineyard and the servant in verses 21–22 meaningful to his message on following the brethren:

The Lord often takes a course to try the confidence of His people, for He planted a branch of the olive tree in the poorest spot in all the land of His vineyard, and He caused it to yield much fruit that was good. That was considered a marvellous work, and one of His servants said, “How camest thou hither to plant this tree, or this branch of the tree? for behold it was the poorest spot in all the land of thy vineyard. And the Lord of the vineyard said unto him, counsel me not, but go to and do all things as I command you.” . . . Well, go to work and dig the Big

Cottonwood canal on the same principle. Begin tomorrow morning, and do not cease until that canal is done, and I will warrant the water to come, and when it comes, that will increase your confidence.²⁸

Zenos's descriptions of fruitless trees and corrupt branches also made easy transfer to life in Utah. Brigham Young declared:

Every individual, every family, and every portion of the community that desire to leave this kingdom, the quicker they go the better for us. The sooner such branches are severed, the healthier will be the tree; its roots and stock will become more powerful, and it will spread its branches to the nethermost parts of the earth. Dead branches tend to make the tree sickly, if they are permitted to remain. Let them be cut off, that the healthy branches may drink more strength and vigour from the roots of the tree, and the foliage of the whole tree be beautiful.²⁹

Likening Church leaders to the roots and members to the branches, Kimball queried, "Why do we see dead limbs on a tree? Because they refuse to receive the nourishment which the root affords. Why do people become dead to their own interests and the interests of the kingdom of God? Because they refuse to obey the will of God through their leaders: the gate of communication is shut down between them and the source of their life and strength in the way of life and salvation."³⁰

The Saints also read the parable as prophetic confirmation of their own destiny. Here they stressed their own heritage as Israel. Brigham Young reminded the Saints, "You understand who we are; we are of the House of Israel, of the royal seed, of the royal blood."³¹ With Johnston's army en route in 1857, Heber C. Kimball assured the Saints, "God will protect us and make a way for our escape, for this is the

natural branch of the House of Israel, and it sprang from that root that was planted in the nethermost part of the garden." Pruning trials were to be expected but they would not overwhelm. "The Lord said, 'Cut away those bitter branches, but do not cut them away any faster than the vine grows.' Let us grow together and be one vine, but many branches, and we shall prosper from this time henceforth and for ever."³²

The Saints recognized, of course, that as Wilford Woodruff put it, "We are all Gentiles in a national capacity."³³ Because of this composite pedigree, Woodruff termed the Saints "a mixed cake among the Gentiles."³⁴ Still, for converts to the Church, prior pedigree mattered little. Once the ordinances of salvation were received, Gentiles were grafted in and figuratively, if not literally, became Israelites. In the words of Heber Kimball, "Repentance, baptism, and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost . . . are the grafting principles."³⁵ "If any of the Gentiles will believe," explained Brigham Young, "we will lay our hands upon them that they may receive the Holy Ghost, and the Lord will make them of the house of Israel. They will be broken off from the wild olive tree, and be grafted into the good and tame olive tree, and will partake of its sap and fatness." All of this made perfectly good sense to a horticulturally aware society. "If you take a bud and inoculate it into another tree," continued Young, "it ceases to receive nourishment from its original stock; it must, however, receive nourishment . . . from the tree into which it has been introduced; it is supported by it, and becomes incorporated with it. It is so with the House of Israel and the Gentile nations; if the Gentiles are grafted into the good olive tree they will partake of its root and fatness."³⁶

One particular phrase in the parable was repeatedly

noticed as a source of hope to nineteenth-century Saints. Zenos indicated that when the servants went out for the last time to prune the vineyard, "the Lord of the vineyard labored also with them" (Jacob 5:72). "Here is a very definite and positive assurance that this work is His," declared Franklin D. Richards, and "that he is particularly to figure in it himself; that he has not entirely committed it, even to angels; as represented in the parable, so beautifully expressed in the Book of Mormon, where the husbandman calls upon his servants to come and help him to prune his vineyard for the last time; we are given to understand that so we are called to be helpers to the Lord our God, to prune his vineyard for the last time."³⁷

Orson Pratt noted that "among all the servants that had laboured in previous dispensations, the parable does not condescend to say that the Lord laboured with them, although he no doubt did. But here it is expressly said that the labourers were few, and the Lord laboured with them." This, he felt, should give the latter-day servants of the Lord great hope. "Try to have this prophecy fulfilled upon your heads," Pratt told the Saints. "Keep the commandments of the Lord of the vineyard in all things, that his blessings may be upon you, that when you set to your hands with the pruning-knife, to prune and train up the branches of the trees of the vineyard, and dig around their roots, the power of the everlasting God may rest upon you and the vineyard where you labour . . . that you may have joy with him in the fruits of the vineyard when the work is finished."³⁸ Even the very survival of Mormonism was tangible evidence to Parley Pratt that the Lord had labored with his latter-day servants. "What else," he asked, "but the power of these laborers and the powers of the Almighty God with them could have led these thousands and tens of thousands of

Latter-day Saints over seas, deserts, through the mountains, overcoming every obstacle and then have sustained them in these Valleys?"³⁹

The vision of laborers pruning the vineyard for the last time was felt to apply equally well to the institutional work of the Church. After providing a rough paraphrase of verses 72–75, Wilford Woodruff urged the Saints that with Zenos's prophecy "uppermost in our minds, we should look for the building up of the kingdom, and . . . try to do all the good we can, labouring to promote the cause and interest of Zion in every department thereof where we are all called to act."⁴⁰ Franklin D. Richards was quite explicit: "Our Savior and the ancient Prophets Nephi, Jacob, Zenos, and others, spoke of the husbandman . . . employing laborers to go into the vineyard and prune it for the last time. I wish to remind you my brethren of the Priesthood, especially those who are called to occupy important leading positions in the Wards, the Stakes, and councils of Zion, that you are the men who were spoken of and written about in their parables."⁴¹

Zenos's description of keeping the "tops and the roots equal" (Jacob 5:66, 73) was another portion of the parable that drew homiletical attention. It served as a reminder of both the importance of unity and the need for balance between spiritual and temporal affairs. "When all things are in proper working order," declared Orson Pratt, "every part will fulfil that which is required of it in relation to its particular calling, and all these various quorums of priesthood will strive to stir up the people to a oneness in regard to spiritual things; thus we keep spiritual and temporal things running parallel to each other, connected more or less together." In the end, "the whole church becomes like unto one body, they become equal. 'And the root, and the top thereof is equal.' "⁴²

Pratt later elaborated how oneness among the Saints would be achieved:

Now what has the Lord said in this parable of the vineyard? "And they did keep the root and the top thereof equal." In what respect were they made equal? The next part of that same sentence declares that they were made equal "according to the strength thereof." Now there is a great deal expressed in those few words. They were not made equal all at once, as the inhabitants of a celestial world are, without any improvements being introduced; but they were to keep the root and the top of the great tree equal, according to the strength thereof; that is according to the condition and circumstances in which the people are placed. Now I consider, that notwithstanding all our deviations from the perfect law that God has given . . . we are doing pretty well. . . .The day will come when this will be fulfilled to the very letter, in accordance with words which say, "they became like unto one body; and the fruit were equal." That is the destination of the Latter-day Saints in the future. The fruit is to be equal; the roots and the branches are all to be kept in their perfect order, and the whole tree kept in a thriving condition.⁴³

CONCLUSION

As with any scripture, interpretation of Zenos's parable has ranged from the literal to the figurative. It was felt to give great insight into the history of Israel and how Israel would ultimately be restored to the Lord's favor. At the same time, it reinforced the voice of warning to the Gentiles so prominent in the early Mormon witness. That it was also "likened" unto the Church's daily life should hardly be surprising, since Nephi himself led out in such an approach to scripture. In the process, creative and challenging usages were made that broadened the parable's relevancy. If in the

end the parable was not cited as often as favorite biblical passages, it was nonetheless cherished as “one of the plainest parables, and sublimest prophecies” in all scripture.

Notes

1. *The Evening and the Morning Star* was known simply as the *Star* in the early years. The quotation is from *Star* 1 (September 1832): [26]. Originally, Jacob 4 and 5 were grouped together as Chapter III of Jacob.

2. *JD* 23:299; 19:330.

3. Grant Underwood, “Book of Mormon Usage in Early LDS Theology,” *Dialogue* 17 (Fall 1984): 35–74. A statistical analysis done for the 1830s revealed that for every Book of Mormon citation, there were nineteen biblical quotes; *ibid.*, 53. Later in the century, the Book of Mormon was used more frequently but still much less than the Bible.

4. Information found in the following paragraphs relies on Peter Toon, ed., *Puritans, the Millennium and the Future of Israel* (Cambridge: Clark, 1970); David S. Katz, *Philo-Semitism and the Readmission of the Jews to England, 1603–1655* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1982); David S. Katz, *Sabbath and Sectarianism in Seventeenth-Century England* (Leiden: Brill, 1988); Richard H. Popkin, “Jewish Messianism and Christian Millenarianism,” in Perez Zagorin, ed., *Culture and Politics from Puritanism to the Enlightenment* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 79–83; Richard H. Popkin, ed., *Millenarianism and Messianism in English Literature and Thought, 1650–1800* (Leiden: Brill, 1988); Richard H. Popkin, “Millenarianism in England, Holland, and America: Jewish-Christian Relations in Amsterdam, London and Newport, Rhode Island,” in S. Hook, W. L. O’Neill, and R. O’Toole, eds., *Philosophy, History and Social Action* (Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1988), 349–71; and Richard H. Popkin, “The Lost Tribes, the Caraites and the English Millenarians,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 37 (Autumn 1986): 213–27.

5. Mayr Verete in his 1981–82 Clark Lecture, “The Idea of the Restoration of Israel in English Thought,” in Popkin, *Millenarianism and Messianism*, 10–11. Mayr Verete, “The Restoration of the Jews in English Protestant Thought,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 8 (1972): 3–50; and Regina S. Sharif, *Non-Jewish Zionism: Its Roots in Western History* (London: Zed, 1983) offer excellent surveys of Christian Zionism. Helpful context is provided in E. Elizabeth Johnson, *The Functions of*

Apocalyptic and Wisdom Traditions in Romans 9–11 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1989); and James W. Watts, "The Remnant Theme: A Survey of New Testament Research, 1921–1987," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 15 (Summer 1988): 109–29.

6. Christopher Hill, " 'Till the Conversion of the Jews'," in Popkin, ed., *Millenarianism and Messianism*, 12–36, demonstrates how widespread in seventeenth-century England was the idea that the conversion and restoration of the Jews was the crucial antecedent to the millennium. See also Mel Scult, *Millennial Expectations and Jewish Liberties: A Study of the Efforts to Convert Jews in Britain up to the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 1978).

7. In Reformed Protestant soteriology, conversion was not simply cognitive acceptance of theological propositions, it was a work of divine grace from start to finish. Therefore, contemporary writers spoke of the "calling" of the Jews when referring to their divinely engineered conversion.

8. Jean Daniélou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 377–404; and Thomas D. Lea, "A Survey of the Doctrine of the Return of Christ in the Ante-Nicene Fathers," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 29 (June 1986): 163–77.

9. (Henry Finch), *The Calling of the Iewes* (London, 1621). See Franz Kobler, "Sir Henry Finch (1558–1625) and the First English Advocates of the Restoration of the Jews to Palestine," *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England* 16 (1952): 101–20.

10. Increase Mather, *The Mystery of Israel's Salvation, Explained and Applied: or, a Discourse Concerning the General Conversion of the Israelitish Nation. Wherein is shewed, 1. That the twelve tribes shall be saved. 2. When this is to be expected. 3. Why this must be. 4. What kind of salvation the Tribes of Israel shall partake of, Viz., A Glorious, Wonderful, Spiritual, Temporal Salvation* (London: Allen, 1669).

11. Hugh G. Stocks, "The Book of Mormon, 1830–1879: A Publishing History," M.A. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1979, pp. 69–72. Stocks points out that "all subsequent LDS editions before 1920 include it virtually unchanged, but they correctly label it as a table of contents and place it in the front of the book" (p. 69).

12. Pratt's notes quoted in this study can be examined simply by looking up the designated verse in the 1879 edition of the Book of Mormon and consulting the footnote.

13. *Times and Seasons* 5 (February 1844): 425–26.

14. W. W. Phelps, *Star* 1 (October 1832): [33].

15. W. W. Phelps, *Messenger and Advocate* 2 (October 1835): 194.
16. Dean C. Jessee, ed., *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984), 271–72. Jessee has chosen to retain the original spelling and syntax.
17. *JD* 16:85.
18. Orson Hyde, “Prophetic Warning,” *Messenger and Advocate* 2 (July 1936): 344.
19. Jessee, *Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 270–72.
20. Scott G. Kenney, ed., *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal*, 9 vols. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1983), 1:469, 21 June 1840.
21. *JD* 2:183–84.
22. *Messenger and Advocate* 1 (November 1834): 18.
23. *JD* 18:177.
24. *JD* 19:330.
25. Orson Pratt’s notes for Jacob 5:70.
26. *Times and Seasons* 5 (January 1845): 761.
27. *JD* 3:309.
28. *JD* 4:250.
29. *JD* 8:66.
30. *JD* 6:124.
31. *JD* 2:269.
32. *JD* 4:210.
33. *JD* 23:79.
34. *JD* 4:233.
35. *JD* 6:123.
36. *JD* 2:269.
37. *JD* 23:106–7.
38. *JD* 6:272.
39. *JD* 3:310.
40. *JD* 4:229.
41. *JD* 24:118.
42. *JD* 19:332.
43. *JD* 21:147–48.

5

The Allegory of the Olive Tree in Jacob

Paul Y. Hoskisson

In language that rivals the best literature has to offer, the allegory of the olive tree is the most beautiful prose expression of God's aspirations for the house of Israel during its history here on the earth. In addition to both generalizing about historical periods and presenting in some detail specific events in the history of the house of Israel, the allegory discusses God's loving care for and tender devotion to Israel and his desire to help Israel reach its righteous potential.¹ The allegory is also, as any well-written allegory is, at once simple and complex, obscure and obvious. Therefore, in this study I do not pretend to plumb the depths of this allegory.² I will, however, touch on four aspects of the allegory suggesting meanings to which I, as a late-twentieth-century Latter-day Saint, am drawn.³ First, what do the symbols of the allegory represent? Second, why did Jacob include the allegory in his book of scripture? Third, to what historical events does the allegory allude in outlining God's dealings with the house of Israel? And fourth, what does the allegory have to say to us today?

WHAT DO THE SYMBOLS OF THE ALLEGORY REPRESENT?

Most of the symbols and metaphors of the allegory have

been identified previously and do not require lengthy explanations here.⁴ The tame olive tree, the dominant metaphor in the allegory, symbolizes the house of Israel (Jacob 5:3). The wild olive trees therefore refer to non-Israelites. The vineyard in which the olive trees, both wild and tame, have been planted is interpreted by Jacob as the world (Jacob 6:3). The pruning, digging, and nourishing of the trees symbolize God's merciful care of the house of Israel (Jacob 6:4). The decay in the tame tree, in my view, represents apostasy from the gospel of Jesus Christ; and the fruit of the tree represents the souls of men as they have become good or bitter through their works.

Several of the metaphors in the allegory—the Lord of the vineyard, the servant, the roots, the grafting and pruning, and the branches—require more discussion. The Lord, the servant, and the goodness of the roots remain constant throughout the allegory.⁵ They therefore, like the vineyard, also probably represent constants. On the other hand the branches, while present throughout the allegory, are variable in that they can change from bearing good fruit to bearing bad fruit and vice versa. The grafting and pruning are also variable because these activities are mentioned in only two segments of the allegory (the second and the fifth, which make up almost half of the allegory).

Most treatments of the allegory see Christ as the lord of the vineyard and the servant as various prophets.⁶ The reason for seeing Christ and the prophets in these roles is twofold. First, the belief that rarely if ever does God the Father involve himself directly in the work here on the earth, but rather, performs all work through Christ and his prophets,⁷ would tend to eliminate God as the hands-on Lord of the vineyard. And second, the untenable belief that *Lord* is used elsewhere in scripture almost exclusively for

Christ also works against seeing God the Father as the Lord of the vineyard. Without arguing the validity of the beliefs on which it is assumed God the Father is not the Lord of the vineyard, I think there is reason to propose that the Lord of the vineyard represents our Heavenly Father and that the servant is Christ. For example, like the Lord of the vineyard, the servant throughout the allegory seems to be a single person and therefore cannot easily be made over into multiple prophets. Moreover, the servant in Jacob 5 can be associated with the "righteous servant" of Isaiah 53, whom Abinadi explicitly identifies as Christ (Mosiah 15:5–7). In addition, the working relationship between the Lord of the vineyard and the servant in the allegory accurately reflects the relationship between the Father and the Son, in that Christ does not act alone, but in all things follows the instructions and example of the Father.⁸ (Perhaps, when the unity of the Godhead and of God's servants is considered, the question of the identity of the Lord and his servant is moot.⁹) Certainly, whatever interpretation is given the servant, the additional servants that the Lord of the vineyard instructs the servant to call in the latter days (Jacob 5:61, 70) represent the prophetically called righteous workers of the Restoration.

The roots of the main natural tree, I believe, represent the scriptural heritage revealed by the God of Israel.¹⁰ (By scriptural heritage I mean not just canonized scripture, but also all other truths that this particular heritage might have received and does receive through inspiration; see D&C 68:4 and Alma 29:8.) If roots are conceived of as providing the nourishment of the word of God to the tree, Jacob 6:7 suggests this correlation of the roots with scripture. If this correlation of roots with scriptural heritage is accurate, it would explain why the roots remain good throughout the

allegory, that is, throughout the history of the house of Israel. The branches on the other hand can alternate between good and bad, tame and wild. Perhaps the branches then represent the various cultures that draw on the scriptural heritage of Israel.¹¹

If the roots represent the scriptural heritage that provides us with the direction and grace to produce good gospel works, then grafting describes the process whereby cultures become attached to the healing influence of the word of God and thus “come to a knowledge of the true Messiah” (1 Nephi 10:14).

The pruning would then be the opposite, namely, being cut off from the healing influence of the word of God. It is through the pruning process and nourishment of the trees of the vineyard that eventually the earth will be cleansed of all evil. The pruning would, therefore, not necessarily be equated with individual excommunication, but rather with being cut off from the scriptural heritage of Israel for refusal to accept the healing influence of the word of God. Destruction soon follows. This process is not dissimilar to individual excommunication, which is simply the formality whereby the Church removes from the record the names of those who have by their actions already cut themselves off from spiritual direction and enlightenment.

WHY DID JACOB INCLUDE THE ALLEGORY IN HIS BOOK OF SCRIPTURE?

The allegory of Zenos forms the center piece of a farewell speech given by Jacob to the Nephites late in Jacob’s life (Jacob 6:13). In this speech Jacob explained that because “the Spirit speaketh . . . of things as they really are, and of things as they really will be” (Jacob 4:13), therefore, he, Jacob, and all the prophets who had gone before, “knew

of Christ and . . . had a hope of his glory" (Jacob 4:4). Indeed, Jacob and the prophets knew about the "great and marvelous . . . works of the Lord" (Jacob 4:8), and they were acquainted with the "atonement of Christ" (Jacob 4:12). With these remarks Jacob sought to convince his "beloved brethren" to "be reconciled" to God (Jacob 4:11), and to "repent . . . and enter in at the strait gate, and continue in the way which is narrow, until [they] obtain eternal life" (Jacob 6:11) by "cleaving unto God as he cleaveth" to them (Jacob 6:5). In short, Jacob taught the Nephites of historical faith in the great and marvelous works of Christ, of their need for repentance, and of the necessity for baptism and the reception of the Holy Ghost.

As a part of this speech, Jacob illustrates reconciliation to God through Christ with the specific example of the Jews: They will reject Christ, the chief cornerstone "upon which they might build and have safe foundation" (Jacob 4:15), because they "despised the words of plainness" (Jacob 4:14) spoken to them by the "prophets of old" (Jacob 4:13) and "killed [those who were sent to testify of Christ] and sought for things that they could not understand" (Jacob 4:14). How can the Jews after rejecting Christ be reconciled to God through him? As explanation, Jacob offered the Nephites Zenos's allegory of the olive tree. When his audience had heard the allegory, Jacob in good Hebrew style expected them to understand, without further explanation, the need for reconciliation and the process whereby reconciliation can take place. In good non-Hebrew style I will now explain the basic historical outline of the allegory.

A BASIC OUTLINE OF THE ALLEGORY¹²

Because the tame olive tree, the central image or likeness in the allegory of Zenos, represents an historical phe-



“I will liken thee, O house of Israel, like unto a tame olive-tree” (Jacob 5:3).

nomenon, the house of Israel (Jacob 5:3), it is reasonable to conclude that the allegory is meant to explain actual events in the temporal and spiritual history of the house of Israel; therefore, the allegory must itself be understandable in a temporal and spiritual sense.

The assignment of the events in the allegory to approximate historical time periods, a prerequisite to understanding the allegory and making it meaningful for today, must start by determining the earliest and latest dates for the beginning and for the end.¹³ The allegory commences in Jacob 5:3 with the founding of the house of Israel, which I

would equate with its origins in the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel).¹⁴ Because the most likely date for the patriarchs must lie within the Middle Bronze Age, 2100–1600 B.C., I place the historical beginning of the allegory between those years.¹⁵ The allegory ends with Jacob 5:77, when the good and bad fruit are gathered and then fire destroys the vineyard. Therefore, with the vineyard standing for the world, I conclude that the allegory ends with the destruction of the earth by fire, which will happen after the Millennium.¹⁶

The time sequences represented in the allegory from the first cultivation of the tame olive tree to the destruction of the vineyard can be divided into seven periods:¹⁷ (1) verse 3, the founding of the house of Israel (the “taking and nourishing” of the tame olive tree) sometime in the Middle Bronze Age (2100–1600 B.C.) and the aging thereof in the Late Bronze Age (1600–1200 B.C.); (2) verses 4–14, the nurturing (starting approximately with the Iron Age, traditionally dated from about 1200 B.C.) and the scattering of the house of Israel, culminating (as far as the allegory is concerned) more or less shortly after 600 B.C.; (3) verses 15–28, the former-day Saints, approximately the first century of the Christian era; (4) verses 29–49, the Great Apostasy, up to about 1820; (5) verses 50–74, the gathering of Israel beginning in 1820; (6) verses 75–76, the Millennium; and (7) verse 77, the end of the world. I will discuss these periods in this order.

First Period: The Founding and Aging of the House of Israel, Jacob 5:3

The beginning years of the house of Israel, the starting point of the allegory, date to between 2100–1600 B.C. (the Middle Bronze Age), the most likely setting for the

Patriarchal Age. By the end of Jacob 5:3, however, the tree had already “waxed old.” This indicates to me that considerable time had passed, perhaps at least four hundred years, and perhaps six hundred or more years, since the tree was first cultivated.¹⁸ In addition, the tree had begun to decay, that is, apostasy from the gospel of Jesus Christ had begun to set in among the trunk and main parts of the house of Israel. If the Lord of the vineyard would not take appropriate measures, the tree would continue to decay and eventually die. It is at this point long after the planting of the tree that the Lord paid a visit to his vineyard, thus initiating the second period.

Second Period: The Scattering of the House of Israel, Jacob 5:4–14

The Lord of the vineyard, on seeing his now venerable tree and the apostasy therein, outlined a course of action to correct the situation, to rejuvenate the tree, and then to plant offshoots of the tame olive tree in other parts of his vineyard. In the first stage of his efforts he stimulated the aged tree to produce younger branches that could bear good fruit. “And it came to pass that the master of the vineyard went forth, and he saw that his olive-tree began to decay; and he said: I will prune it, and dig about it, and nourish it, that perhaps it may shoot forth young and tender branches, and it perish not” (Jacob 5:4). Beginning with prophets such as Moses, Samuel, Elijah, and Isaiah, the Lord attempted to reclaim the house of Israel from apostasy. Even with this effort and only after a period of “many days,” the Lord met with merely minimal success, because the olive tree “began to put forth somewhat a little, young and tender branches” (Jacob 5:6), while most of the tree continued to deteriorate. As the allegory also makes clear, the

rulers and the ruling class, the “main top” of the tree, were with few exceptions almost beyond recovery (Jacob 5:6).

Two possible examples of this apostasy suffice.¹⁹ First, Jeroboam, the initial king of the Northern Kingdom, introduced calf icons at the cultic sites of Dan and Bethel, thus establishing one of the great political and cultic sins of king and people in the Old Testament.²⁰ And second, Manasseh, a king of the Southern Kingdom, ushered in one of the most condemned reigns in biblical history, summarized in one verse, “But [the Kingdom of Judah] hearkened not: and Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than did the nations whom the Lord destroyed before the children of Israel” (2 Kings 21:9).²¹ It was no wonder that the Lord of the vineyard grieved that he “should lose this tree” (Jacob 5:7), that is, that the house of Israel should cease to exist as a cultural entity.

At this juncture the Lord of the vineyard instructed the servant to take three additional measures in addition to the pruning, digging, and nourishing: “Go and pluck the branches from a wild olive-tree, and bring them hither unto me; and we will pluck off those main branches which are beginning to wither away, and we will cast them into the fire that they may be burned. . . . And behold, saith the Lord of the vineyard, I take away many of these young and tender branches, and I will graft them whithersoever I will” (Jacob 5:7–8). These three steps entailed (1) cutting out those parts of Israel in apostasy (mainly the upper classes) and destroying them, (2) grafting into Israel other peoples, and (3) either grafting or planting some of the young and tender natural branches of the house of Israel in other parts of the vineyard. The first step began at the latest when the Assyrians destroyed the Northern Kingdom in a series of wars between 734 and 720 B.C. The Assyrians also carried



“Cast them into the fire that they may be burned” (Jacob 5:7).

away many inhabitants of the Southern Kingdom during campaigns that lasted to about 700 B.C. The Babylonians continued the scattering of the house of Israel by destroying the Southern Kingdom in various battles between 605 and 586 B.C.

In at least two stages after 720 B.C., the Assyrians helped fulfill the second set of instructions by moving other peoples into the territorial vacuum created in Israel when they substantially depopulated the Northern Kingdom.²² These imported peoples, at least to some extent, intermarried with the Israelites left behind by the Assyrians, producing a new cultural melding. The Israelites that were carried into captivity by the Assyrians as well as the Judean captives of the Babylonians probably intermarried with their non-Israelite neighbors and accepted new cultural elements.²³

The third measure the Lord of the vineyard proposed involved transporting young and tender groups of Israelites to other lands away from Palestine. We certainly do not



These will I place in the nethermost part of my vineyard" (Jacob 5:13).

know the full extent of this scattering or all of the means the Lord used to scatter Israel. The deportation of the Northern and Southern Kingdoms was part of this process, as were the Lehites, alluded to in the allegory. Certainly other groups were led away also.

If it is possible from the allegory to make observations about the nature of the scattering of Israel, I would suggest two conclusions. First, the apostate branches of Israel were not scattered but destroyed, "plucked off . . . and cast . . . into the fire" (Jacob 5:7). This does not necessarily refer to apostate individuals, but certainly it applies to cultic, political, and cultural continuity. And second, the branches that were scattered were "young and tender" (Jacob 5:8), that is, they were at the time of their scattering yet formable, new developments, not in the mainstream of apostate Israelite culture, and capable of bearing good fruit.

With parts of the house of Israel scattered over much of

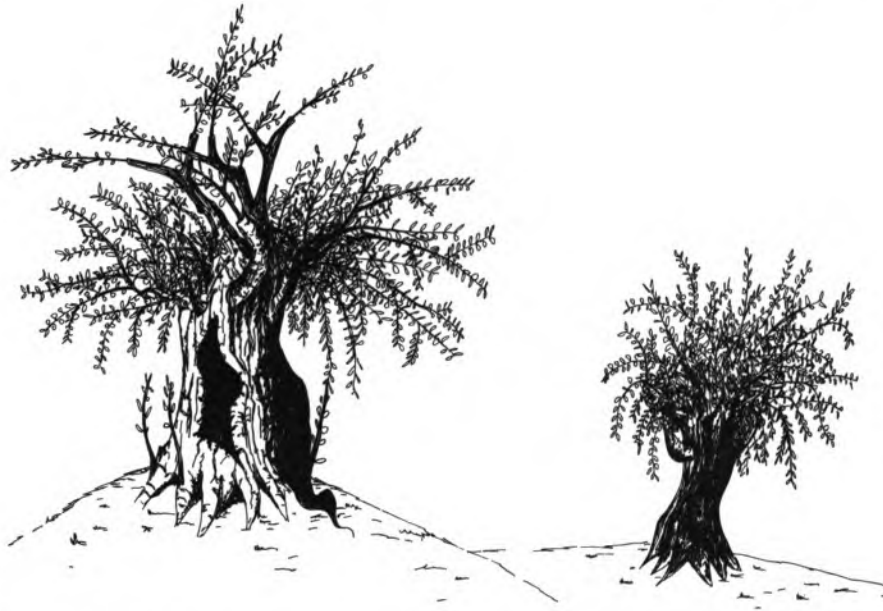
the surface of the earth and with intermarriage between Israelites and non-Israelites, and the subsequent cultural shifts both in and outside of Palestine, perhaps the tree would be saved. For the result we must turn to the next period.

Third Period: The Day of the Former-day Saints, Jacob 5:15–28

The allegory provides three bits of information that add precision to the dating of the period I have termed the day of the former-day Saints. First, after the nurturing of Israel and the scattering of the young and tender branches of Israel, the Lord allowed “a long time” to elapse before coming to inspect the vineyard (Jacob 5:15).²⁴ If the removal of the decayed parts of the house of Israel from Palestine was essentially completed by about 586 B.C. and the scattering of the young and tender branches of Israel well underway by that time, then the day of the former-day Saints must be considerably later than this date. How much later can be determined by the next indication.

Second, when the Lord eventually returned to the vineyard, he discovered that the mother tree with branches from other nations grafted in had produced “tame fruit” (Jacob 5:18). The only apparent historical period when Israel with Gentile grafts produced good fruit came at the time of Christ’s mortal ministry and the following decades. Thus the tentative dates for the third era in the allegory, the day of the former-day Saints, can be placed around the time of Christ, about six hundred years after the closing of the previous period.

This dating is confirmed by the third bit of information in this section. The last²⁵ transplanted tree, placed in “a good spot of ground; yea, even that which was choice unto [the



“Take thou the branches of the wild olive-tree, and graft them in”
(Jacob 5:9).

Lord] above all other parts of the land of [his] vineyard” (Jacob 5:43), produced at this time part good and part evil branches. The choicest spot of land on the whole earth in which the transplanted branch of Israel produced a good and an evil culture, as far as we know, can only refer to the righteous and unrighteous Lehites in the Americas,²⁶ and the historical setting can only have been before the Great Apostasy.²⁷ The date for this part of this section of the allegory must also be the first Christian century.

After seeing that the good fruit of all the trees was gathered and that the last transplant was nurtured so that the evil parts of it might bring forth good fruit, the Lord left his vineyard, not to return for some time. Upon his return the next period, the fourth, receives definition.

Fourth Period: The Great Apostasy, Jacob 5:29–49

When the Lord arrived again after “a long time” (Jacob 5:29) to inspect his vineyard, he found that the mother tree

had “brought forth much fruit, and there is none of it which is good. And behold there are all kinds of bad fruit” (Jacob 5:32). This is precisely the situation of the (Christian) world as described by the Lord to the Prophet Joseph in the Sacred Grove (Joseph Smith–History 1:19). The mother tree in Israel that had borne much good fruit in the early Christian era had become entirely corrupt. As for the first transplanted branches, they also carried nothing but bad fruit. The good section of the last tree, the righteous Lehites, had been entirely destroyed by the evil branch, the apostate Lehites, so that nothing but wild fruit remained on it also. The apostasy had been complete and universal in all the trees representing Israel. Yet the roots remained good (Jacob 5:34).

It is at this point that the Lord proposed a total destruction of the trees in his vineyard: “Let us go to and hew down the trees of the vineyard and cast them into the fire, that they shall not cumber the ground of my vineyard, for I have done all. What could I have done more for my vineyard?” (Jacob 5:49). What need did he have of trees that produced only unprofitable fruit? Better to cut down the trees, burn them, and make something else out of the vineyard.²⁸ After all, the Lord had done everything he could have to save the world from apostasy. Yet the Lord’s servant counseled him to spare the world for a little time, and the Lord accepted the advice.²⁹ This leads into the fifth era of time in the allegory.

Fifth Period: The Gathering of Israel, Jacob 5:50–74

The text states explicitly that between earlier periods, between the scattering of Israel and the day of the former-day Saints and again between the day of the former-day Saints and the Lord’s acknowledgment of the Great Apostasy, “a long time passed away” (Jacob 5:50). Unlike

the long passage of time between these previous periods, the allegory makes clear that no significant time transpired between the acknowledgment of the Great Apostasy (Jacob 5:49) and the beginnings of the gathering of Israel (Jacob 5:50 and following). This is of course how Latter-day Saints read history. On a spring day in 1820 the world changed from total submersion in apostasy to the first significant steps that would begin the gathering. To be sure, the aggregate of the first decade was minuscule, but the gathering had commenced.

The gathering described in the allegory is also deliberately slow: "Wherefore, dig about them, and prune them, and dung them once more, for the last time, for the end draweth nigh. And if it be so that these last grafts shall grow, and bring forth the natural fruit, then shall ye prepare the way for them, that they may grow. And as they begin to grow ye shall clear away the branches which bring forth bitter fruit, according to the strength of the good and the size thereof; and ye shall not clear away the bad thereof all at once, lest the roots thereof should be too strong for the graft, and the graft thereof shall perish, and I lose the trees of my vineyard" (Jacob 5:64–65). From the transplanted tame trees that had become wild, natural branches would be cut and grafted back into the mother tree, and from the mother tree which had also become wild, branches would be grafted into the transplanted tame trees. As these branches gain strength and as the roots can bear it, the branches that continue to produce wild fruit will eventually be pruned out and destroyed.

This process is observable not only in the broad strokes of the history of the Restoration as the gospel is brought to the different cultures of the world, but also in the fine strokes of contemporary stakes and missions. Through the missionary program peoples are brought into the Church.

These new peoples are influenced by the gospel for a few years or for many generations, serving the Lord more or less faithfully for a number of years. But as the Church makes progress, some of these new twigs and boughs fail to make progress with the rest of the membership. As was the case during the Great Apostasy, pride prevents them from continuing to change and repent. This process extends down to the individual level as well. Individuals leave the Church, or just fade away, usually taking their posterity with them. In time such unprofitable twigs are pruned out of the tree. At the same time the Lord of the vineyard continues to work with those cultures and individuals that can still be reclaimed or improved.

This is, however, the last time the Lord of the vineyard will, through grafting and pruning, clean and purify the vineyard (Jacob 5:62–63; see also D&C 24:19; 39:17; 43:28; and 95:4). He will continue this process until there is no more degeneracy or corruption anywhere in the vineyard and the whole earth is full of his glory. When the earth no longer produces evil, the sixth or penultimate epoch of the allegory will commence.

Sixth Period: The Millennium, Jacob 5:75–76

Unlike the other periods so far discussed, the benefit of hindsight is not available. However, this does not prevent discussion of the points made in this section of the allegory. Of this thousand-year period (see Revelation 20:2–7; D&C 29:11, 22; 88:110; Moses 7:64–65), the allegory simply states that the Lord will “for a long time . . . lay up of the fruit of [his] vineyard unto [his] own self” (Jacob 5:76). There will be no corruption on the earth during this time. “The Lord of the vineyard saw that his fruit was good, and that his vineyard was no more corrupt, . . . and the bad [was] cast



“The Lord of the vineyard saw that his fruit was good (Jacob 5:75).

away” (Jacob 5:75). When after this “long time” branches of the tree again begin to degenerate and bad fruit appears, the Millennium will have concluded and the final or seventh epoch of the allegory will have begun.

Seventh Period: The End of the World, Jacob 5:77

Again, the benefit of hindsight is not available. During this ultimate stage of the earth’s existence, when after the Millennium the world again will have degenerated, the good and the bad will be separated. The Lord will take the good fruit to himself, and the bad he will destroy by fire along with the world that spawned them.

WHAT DOES THE ALLEGORY HAVE TO SAY TO US?

With this understanding of the basic outline of the events covered by the allegory, it is possible to turn to the

contents and do as Nephi has suggested, to “liken all scriptures unto us” (1 Nephi 19:23). I will discuss below lessons concerning God’s treatment of the vineyard, the fruitfulness of the parts of the vineyard, observations about the latter-day work during the gathering of Israel, and lessons from the Apostasy.

God is not a partial God (Moroni 8:18); he cares for all parts of his vineyard equally (Jacob 5:28). We may not be able to understand from our finite perspective in what way the seeming inequities of this world can be reconciled with God’s statement that he “maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matthew 5:45). But our omniscient God has assured us that “all are alike unto God” (2 Nephi 26:33). This impartiality of God is illustrated in the allegory when the Lord of the vineyard declares that he has not slackened his hand, but has “nourished” the world, “digged about it, and pruned it . . . almost all the day long” (Jacob 5:47). There is no part of the vineyard that his hand has not touched.³⁰ Indeed, no part of the earth and no inhabitants of the earth can ever justifiably make the claim that God has treated them unjustly. If they have not produced good fruit they cannot blame it on the lack of care God gave to their part of the vineyard.

The allegory also makes it clear that the varying qualities of the different parts of the world have no bearing (or, perhaps, an inverse relationship) on whether good gospel fruit is produced. From earthly experience it might seem that given equal care, as was pointed out in the preceding paragraph, fruitfulness might depend on the fecundity of the soil. The allegory mentions specifically that two parts of the vineyard where young and tender olive branches were planted were the worst spots in all the vineyard and that

another was the best spot. And yet when the Lord of the vineyard came to look at the trees, the two planted in the worst spots had produced only good fruit, while the one planted in the best spot had produced both good and bad fruit. In other words, with the equal treatment given by God to all parts of the world, it is not the spot of ground on the earth to which people are attached that makes the difference. All people everywhere on the earth are capable of producing good works and, therefore, of becoming desirable fruit.

The allegory comments on the purification process the earth and the house of Israel will undergo before the Second Coming and explains how the gathering of Israel consists of pruning out the branches bearing bad fruit and grafting the tame olive branches back into the tame trees (note the plural, *trees*, in verses 55–58, 63–66, 74). This process will proceed in these latter days in a set order designed to ensure the survival of the trees until they eventually all bear fruit pleasing to the Lord. First, those peoples who produce the worst, the “most bitter fruit,” will be removed from the tree of the house of Israel, and other natural members of the house of Israel will be brought in. At about the same time the slow process will begin of feeding and caring for, “nourishing,” the members to help them produce good works. While these natural members of the house of Israel begin to produce good works, the pruning out of the worst members will begin, but this process will also move slowly, “according to the strength of the good and the size thereof,” that is, according to the ability of the house of Israel to bear the pruning. This pruning will continue, as mentioned above, until the Millennium, when the process will be complete and there will be no evil anywhere on the earth, because the

“fruit” will be “good” and the “vineyard” will be “no more corrupt” (verse 75).

This grafting and pruning process is evident today in the Restoration. Successful grafting consists of “coming to a knowledge of the true Messiah” (1 Nephi 10:14), Christ, through the word of God. The most obvious mechanism today to graft into the scriptural heritage is through conversion to the gospel of Jesus Christ as revealed through the process of the Restoration. In 1820, when the Prophet Joseph went into the grove to pray (perhaps it was not coincidence that the Restoration began in a grove of trees), the entire world was devoid of the kind of fruit the Lord desired. When Joseph came out of the woods that spring day, the first convert had been made. From that beginning in nineteenth-century frontier America, peoples and cultures have been exposed to the healing influence of the gospel of Jesus Christ through the renewed scriptural heritage of the house of Israel. The realization of this healing process can be seen in the Restoration. As soon as the people who accept the gospel are able to receive them, God reveals correct principles, doctrines, and eternal ordinances. In this way the scriptural heritage of the house of Israel, the roots, “may take strength” (Jacob 5:59) and bless the peoples and cultures nourished by them. And as the natural branches of the house of Israel in these latter days grow from the nourishment and care of God, he prepares “the way for them that they may grow” even more (Jacob 5:64).

While this grafting of the natural branches of the house of Israel onto the tame trees continues and these grafts take to the gospel of Jesus Christ provided by the scriptural heritage of the house of Israel, the pruning also proceeds. Those people who refuse to accept the restored principles, doctrines, and ordinances of the gospel are creating the con-

ditions that will sooner or later lead to their separation from the house of Israel. Some of these people simply stop producing good works or fail to keep up with the rest of the tree. Other people produce evil works and are cut off sooner.

This process can affect a whole people. For instance, the Lord warned the people of this dispensation that they are under condemnation for taking lightly the scriptural heritage of the Restoration, "the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments" (D&C 84:54–58). This warning was repeated again by President Benson in 1986.³¹ And the process can affect individuals. Consider for instance the prominent early Latter-day Saint who "had been called to preach the gospel but had been known to say that he 'would rather die than go forth to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles.' " As a result he "was attacked with the cholera . . . and died."³² If we fail as a people or as individuals to take strength from our latter-day scriptural roots, particularly the Book of Mormon and the living prophets, we will eventually find ourselves pruned out of the house of Israel and cast "into the fire" (5:58).

The allegory makes it clear that the grafting and pruning process, the gathering of Israel and the trying of the nations of the earth, will continue simultaneously until the Millennium. This means that as the Saints accept and assimilate additional nourishment from their scriptural sources, the Lord will require a higher level of performance. Thus the allegory foresees in the grafting and pruning process a reversal of what President Benson has called the Samuel principle. According to this principle, "within certain bounds [God] grants unto men according to their desires."³³ The principle received its name from the story in 1 Samuel 8 where the people of Israel demand, contrary to the wishes

of God and his prophet Samuel, that God give them a king. God granted them their desire to their own eventual sorrow.

The reverse of the Samuel principle during the Restoration can be illustrated by the Word of Wisdom. As the Saints assimilated and lived the Word of Wisdom, God saw fit to require a more strict application of it, until today it is often used as a measure of a member's commitment to the kingdom. Other examples of additional nourishment must include the material in sections 137 and 138 of the Doctrine and Covenants. These revelations were just as true when they were received as when they were accepted by the Church as scripture in 1976 and, therefore, as binding on the membership. Perhaps, as the allegory in principle suggests, the members were capable in 1976 of submitting themselves to the additional instruction available in these visions. Both the initial gift of the Word of Wisdom in 1833 and its subsequent development in the Church and the addition of sections 137 and 138 to the canon are modern examples of how our scriptural heritage, our roots, "may take [additional] strength because of their goodness" (Jacob 5:59). In the future, as we are faithful in assimilating the nourishment from the roots, we can look forward to an even greater scriptural heritage, for God "will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God" (Articles of Faith 9).

As the branches of the house of Israel become able to bear the strong doctrines, principles, and ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and as the roots take additional strength, the trees of the house of Israel will continue to be nourished, strengthened, and purified until they have become "like unto one body," and bear nothing but good fruit and the whole earth is "no more corrupt" (Jacob

5:74–75). This process of preparing the house of Israel for the Millennium finds expression in another beautiful and meaning-laden metaphor of the scriptures, the metaphor of the bride and the bridegroom. (For instance, see Matthew 25:1–13.) In the words of Isaiah, “As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee” (Isaiah 62:5).

The allegory leaves no doubt that God attempted everything in his power to prevent the Apostasy. When God came to inspect the world after the Apostasy had taken place and “all creeds [of the Apostasy had become] an abomination in [God’s] sight” (Joseph Smith–History 1:19), God asked the servant in the allegory, “What could I have done more for my vineyard” to have prevented the Apostasy (Jacob 5:41)? The answer to this rhetorical question was that there was nothing he could have done more. He did not slacken his hand in creating the right environment and the necessary conditions for the gospel to flourish and produce fruit (Jacob 5:47). As explained in Jacob 5:28, “The Lord of the vineyard and the servant of the Lord of the vineyard did nourish all the fruit of the vineyard.” But, as Jacob 5:46 explains, “Notwithstanding all the care which we [for example, the Lord and his servant] have taken of my vineyard, the trees thereof have become corrupted, that they bring forth no good fruit.” In short, it was not lack of effort on God’s part that allowed the Apostasy to occur.

What then caused the Apostasy? The Lord of the vineyard himself asked that question at the end of Jacob 5:47, “Who is it that has corrupted my vineyard,” that is, who has caused the Apostasy? In Jacob 5:48 the servant answered his Lord, “Is it not the loftiness of thy vineyard,” pride, that caused the Apostasy? The servant further noted,

in explaining the process of the Apostasy, “Have not the branches overcome the roots thereof, behold they grew faster than the strength of the roots, taking strength unto themselves.” The Israelite and Gentile branches on the tame olive trees, through pride and haughtiness, took strength unto themselves. That is, rather than relying on their scriptural heritage for strength and nourishment, they relied on their own strength and abilities, thus nullifying the influence of the scriptural heritage from which they could have received direction and guidance. And by acting on their own in their pride they deemed themselves strong and grew in directions that were not appropriate, ending in apostasy.³⁴

Clearly, the Apostasy was not caused by a set of haphazard physical circumstances that God might have prevented. Prideful self-will brought about the Great Apostasy and brings about any other apostasy. Apostasy is an act of choosing self over direction and nourishment from the appropriate and righteous channels God has instituted. And because it is an act of agency, God does not prevent it.

The cause of the Apostasy as explained in the allegory should serve as a warning to those called to serve in the vineyard in these latter days. We as individuals can bring about our own apostasy through our own prideful self-will, and there is little if anything God can do to prevent it. If we abandon the nourishment of the scriptural heritage of our day—the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, the Bible, and the constant direction of the living prophets—and rely on our own strength, wisdom, and understanding, we also will soon fall victim to an apostasy that will spiritually destroy us. The antidote then and now against apostasy, against prideful self-will, was explained by King Benjamin: “Men drink damnation to

their own souls except they humble themselves and become . . . as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father" (Mosiah 3:18–19).

While we should be concerned about our own possible individual apostasy, the next section (Jacob 5:50–73, the gathering of the house of Israel) explains that we need not worry about the Church falling into apostasy in these latter days. When the Lord of the vineyard came to look at the earth near the end of the Apostasy, he found that none of the various trees of the house of Israel, with or without Gentiles grafted in, were bearing good fruit. Jacob 5:31–32 describes this condition of apostasy, "The Lord of the vineyard did taste of the fruit, every sort according to its number. And the Lord of the vineyard said: Behold, this long time have we nourished this tree, and I have laid up unto myself against the season much fruit. But behold, this time it hath brought forth much fruit, and there is none of it which is good. And behold, there are all kinds of bad fruit; and it profiteth me nothing." (What an apt description of the Apostasy.) This was the condition of the world in 1820.

Rather than raze the unprofitable, apostate earth, God decided to try one more time to establish the gospel on the earth to see if the trees of the vineyard would produce good fruit. He began by having the branches from the mother tree "grafted into the natural trees" and branches from the natural trees "grafted into their mother tree" (Jacob 5:55 and 56). He instructed the servant to "dig about them, and prune them, and dung them once more, for the last time" (Jacob 5:64). From the beginning of the gathering of the house of Israel until the Millennium, from the Restoration until the Second Coming, there is an unbroken effort by the



“Dig about them, and prune them, and dung them once more, for the last time” (Jacob 5:64).

main servant and “other servants” (Jacob 5:70) to “labor in the vineyard” with all their might for “the last time” (Jacob 5:71). The servant and his co-workers “did obey the commandments of the Lord of the vineyard in all things” (Jacob 5:72).

The leaders of the Restoration, from the Prophet Joseph Smith through contemporary General Authorities, have been called to work in the world now for the last time (see D&C 24:19; 39:17; 43:28; and 95:4). And they shall continue to work, carrying out “the commandments of the Lord . . . in all things” (Jacob 5:72). They will not labor after the precepts of the world, but will follow the instructions of the Lord tenaciously. And they will continue laboring “with all diligence, according to the commandments of the Lord” (Jacob 5:74) until they have succeeded in “casting” out of the world all of the bad elements (Jacob 5:74) and the world

is “no more corrupt” (Jacob 5:75). The work of the Restoration, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the kingdom of God on earth, will continue to grow and spread until it has left no room on the earth for evil. Indeed, Daniel the prophet “foresaw and foretold the establishment of the kingdom of God in the latter days, never again to be destroyed nor given to other people” (D&C 138:44). We need have no fear in this dispensation that the Church, the kingdom of God, might be lost again to apostasy. Individuals may apostatize, perhaps even some of the leaders, but as the allegory makes clear, the vineyard will grow, becoming more pure, until good fruit fills the earth.

I cannot complete this discussion of the allegory of the olive tree without returning to the beginning, the reason Jacob gave the allegory: How can we be reconciled to God through Jesus Christ? If I were writing in good Hebrew style I would expect the reader at this point to know, from the allegory itself and the above discussion, how reconciliation takes place. But I am not, and I would be untrue to my own heritage if I did not to the best of my ability clearly explain how we can be reconciled to God through Jesus Christ. As the allegory suggests, the process is deceptively simple³⁵ and easy: Remain attached long enough to our roots, the scriptural heritage revealed by the God of Israel, that the healing influence of divine direction, of a “knowledge of the true Messiah,” our Lord and Redeemer (1 Nephi 10:14), can change us from a twig bearing bitter fruit to a natural twig bearing good fruit. It does not matter whether our scriptural heritage is planted in a good spot on the earth or a bad one, we can bear fruit under the loving and wise care of the Lord of the vineyard. As Limhi, a man who himself had groped for reconciliation and found it, said, “If [we] will turn to the Lord with full purpose of heart, and put

[our] trust in him, and serve him with all diligence of mind, if [we] do this, he will, according to his own will and pleasure" (Mosiah 7:33), succor us, nourish us, and save us from destruction. Only our pride or self-will can prevent us from producing good fruit, thereby precipitating our own pruning from the tree. In language more related to the allegory than a first glance might suggest, Jacob stated the formula both simply and eloquently: "How merciful is our God unto us, for he remembereth the house of Israel, both roots and branches; and he stretches forth his hands unto them all the day long; and they are a stiffnecked and a gainsaying people; but as many as will not harden their hearts shall be saved in the kingdom of God. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, I beseech of you in words of soberness that ye would repent, and come with full purpose of heart, and cleave unto God as he cleaveth unto you" (Jacob 6:4–5).

Notes

1. Though Jacob delivered the allegory in Jacob 5, the allegory was originally given by Zenos, who apparently was a prophet of Old Testament times whose writings were recorded on the brass plates. Presently no Old World source mentions him. Zenos is of course mentioned elsewhere in the Book of Mormon: 1 Nephi 19:10, 12, 16; Alma 33:3, 13, 15; 34:7; Helaman 8:19; 15:11; and 3 Nephi 10:16. Though Jacob is the first author in the Book of Mormon to connect this allegory to Zenos, Jacob was most likely not the first Book of Mormon prophet to mention the content of this allegory. Nephi said that his father Lehi spoke about an olive tree that represented the house of Israel, and that from that tree "branches would be broken off and should be scattered upon all the face of the earth" (1 Nephi 10:12).

2. Previous studies include Kent P. Jackson, "Nourished by the Good Word of God (Jacob 4–6)," in Kent P. Jackson, ed., *1 Nephi to Alma 29*, vol. 7 of *Studies in Scripture* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1987), 190–94; Monte Nyman, *An Ensign to All People* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1987), 24–34, and the summary table on page 36. See also Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 2 (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft,

1988), 46–82; Ariel Crowley, *About the Book of Mormon* (Idaho City, ID: n.p., 1961), 150–52; and *Book of Mormon Student Manual: Religion 121 and 122* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1989), 47–48. Richard K. Wilson of Provo, Utah, has prepared an unpublished, 82-page, wide-ranging discussion of the allegory.

3. Here I must issue a note of caution. While I believe that this allegory refers to specific historical periods, places, processes, events, and even individuals, no allegory can be delineated to its smallest details without entering the realm of speculation at best and of absurdity at worst. Therefore, I offer my explanation here in the hopes that it will be helpful to some students and harmful to none.

4. For a convenient summary see Nyman, *An Ensign to All People*, 35, table 1. His reasons for the identifications can be found on pp. 22–24. See also the summary in Jackson, “Nourished by the Good Word of God,” 190; and *Book of Mormon Student Manual*, 47–48.

5. See in particular verses 11, 36, 53, and 59, although the possibility of the root perishing is mentioned in 5:8, and the Lord comes and goes.

6. See footnote 2 for the literature.

7. As Joseph Fielding Smith stated it, “In all of the scriptures, where God is mentioned and where he has appeared, it was [Christ]. . . . The Father has never dealt with man directly and personally since the fall, and he has never appeared except to introduce and bear record of the Son” (*Doctrines of Salvation: Sermons and Writings of Joseph Fielding Smith*, Bruce R. McConkie, compiler [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954], 1:27).

8. See for example John 8:28, “I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me.” Cf. John 5:19 and 28.

9. Note that Crowley, *About the Book of Mormon*, 121, uses the generic “God,” and Jackson, “Nourished by the Good Word of God,” 190, uses “Lord” for the Lord of the vineyard, both thus avoiding the issue.

10. Chauncey C. Riddle of the Brigham Young University Philosophy Department suggested this idea to me privately on September 13, 1989. Since then, I have come to accept this view, partially for the reasons stated above. Several other commentaries equate the roots with progenitors. No doubt this interpretation comes from the belief that if the word *root* means progenitors in Malachi 4:1, then it must mean that in all scriptural contexts. Still others have suggested that the roots represent the covenants associated with the house of Israel; see for instance *The Book of Mormon Student Manual*. This interpretation seems to me to be too narrow.

11. Bruce Wilson of Provo, Utah, expressed this idea (based at least in part on R. Wilson, 30) to me in a private conversation on August 3, 1989.

12. The discussion that follows in this third section is a slightly modified version of my paper "Explicating the Mystery of the Rejected Foundation Stone: The Allegory of the Olive Tree," *BYU Studies* 30 (1991): 77–87.

13. There are two aspects to this single question: When did Zenos compose the original allegory, and what events are covered in this allegorized history of the house of Israel? The answer to the second question, irrespective of the answer to the first question, is necessary if the allegory is to be more than an academic exercise for the modern reader. Therefore, I will only discuss the second question. Treatments of the first question are scattered elsewhere in this volume.

14. For the house of Israel beginning with Abraham and continuing with Isaac and Jacob, see Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 503: "Israelite history begins not with father Jacob, who is Israel, nor with his tribal descendants who adopted his name as theirs, but with Abraham, their father. In the true and spiritual sense of the terms, Abraham was the first Hebrew, the first Israelite, and the first Jew." Reviewers to whom I have given this paper have suggested variously that the planting of the house of Israel at the beginning of the allegory might be understood to occur with Adam or Noah or Moses. It seems to me that the allegory discusses only the house of Israel and that therefore the allegory begins with the founding of the house of Israel. Independent of and previous to my first reading of the above quote from Bruce R. McConkie, based on internal evidence in the allegory itself, I arrived at the conclusion that the founding of the house of Israel can denote only the patriarchs.

15. Though the "Bible Dictionary" of the Latter-day Saint edition of the Holy Bible (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1979), 636, places the patriarchs in the center of the Middle Bronze Age, this date is not unanimous among scholars. Cyrus Gordon, for instance, dated many of the events of the Patriarchal Narratives to the Late Bronze Age ("Abraham and the Merchants of Ura," *Journal of Near East Studies* 17 [1958]: 31). However, I accept the likelihood that the pharaoh of the Exodus was Ramses II, who reigned in the middle of the thirteenth century B.C. This would place the Exodus at the very beginning of the Late Bronze Age (allowing, with Genesis 15:13 and Exodus 12:40, 400 to 430 years

for the sojourn in Egypt) and would push the patriarchs back into the Middle Bronze Age. See also Nyman, *An Ensign for All People*, 24, for the beginning of the allegory at "about 1800 B.C., when the twelve sons of Jacob were living in Canaan." Others put the planting of the main olive tree in other centuries of early Israelite history.

16. For this same conclusion see Jackson, "Nourished by the Good Word of God," 193–94. The destruction of the earth by fire after the Millennium is mentioned at least once in the standard works, "For the great Millennium, of which I have spoken by the mouth of my servants, shall come. For Satan shall be bound, and when he is loosed again he shall only reign for a little season, and then cometh the end of the earth. And he that liveth in righteousness shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye, and the earth shall pass away so as by fire. And the wicked shall go away into unquenchable fire, and their end no man knoweth on earth, nor ever shall know, until they come before me in judgment" (D&C 43:30–33). It is probably also the referent in Matthew 3:13. See also the theological underpinnings of the destruction of the earth by fire in Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd. ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), 210 (see also p. 251), and the references there to *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:72–89; and Parley P. Pratt, *Voice of Warning* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1957), chapter 5.

If the destruction of the earth by fire, mentioned in verse 77, refers to the destruction by fire before the Millennium (see for example McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 692, 735), then one could argue that the end of the allegory coincides with the beginning of the Millennium. That this is not likely becomes evident from an internal examination of the allegory. As I demonstrate below, verses 75 and 76 refer to the Millennium. Therefore, verse 77 must refer to the period after the Millennium.

17. Nyman also divides the allegory into seven periods, but we agree on only three of the divisions. He separates the allegory into the following time periods: (1) verses 3–14: "From Jacob to the end of the prophets," about 1800–400 B.C.; (2) verse 15: "A long time passed away"; (3) verses 16–28: "The ministry of Jesus Christ," about A.D. 30–34; (4) verse 29: "A long time passed away"; (5) verses 30–75: "The Restoration, about A.D. 1820 to the Millennium"; (6) verse 76: "A long time passed away"; (7) verse 77: "The end of the earth."

18. The figure four hundred to six hundred years may be derived from the difference between the time the olive tree was first cultivated sometime in the Middle Bronze Age and the beginning of the next period in the allegory, the onset of the Iron Age about 1200 B.C.

That four hundred to six hundred years is plausible seems likely from personal observation of olive trees in present-day Palestine. Like contemporary olive trees, it is likely that ancient olive trees, with proper care, not only could live for hundreds of years (not the decades of most domestically cultivated trees), but could also produce valuable crops for the life of the tree. (For the technical aspects of olive tree culture, see the other appropriate articles in this book. In addition see Arthur Wallace, "The Allegory of the Tame and Wild Olive Trees Horticulturally Considered," in Paul R. Cheesman and C. Wilfred Griggs, eds., *Scriptures for the Modern World*, Religious Studies Monograph Series 11 [Provo: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1984], 113–20.) Therefore, if the olive tree had "waxed old," it would not be measured by the decades of contemporary domestic trees, but by centuries.

19. There are far too many examples of the apostasy of Israel in this time period for me to list them here. In addition to the two I discuss in the text, consider the following instances. Moses knew at the time of his calling that apostate Israel would attempt to reject him as Jehovah's prophet (Exodus 3:13–14). Joshua's famous ultimatum, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve" (Joshua 24:15), would have been necessary only if the Israelites were vacillating, i.e., flirting with apostasy. Ezekiel in chapter 16 spoke retrospectively in wonderfully earthy terms of the reality of Israel's apostasy. For a wonderful explanation of Ezekiel 16 and how it relates to apostasy in Israel, see Joseph E. Coleson, "Israel's Life Cycle from Birth to Resurrection," in Avraham Gileadi, ed., *Israel's Apostasy and Restoration: Essays in Honor of Roland K. Harrison* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book, 1987), 237–50. And, finally, from the late period see Malachi 3:7, "Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them."

20. 1 Kings 12:25–33 and 15:30, among others. To see how Jeroboam influenced subsequent Israelite history, see 2 Kings 10:29–31.

21. Josiah's reforms at about 620 B.C. certainly must have been a breath of fresh air after the abominations of Manasseh (2 Kings 22–24; see also 2 Chronicles 33), but it was too little, too late.

22. As part of their foreign policy the Assyrians deported rebellious subjects to other areas within their empire that had previously been partially depopulated because those inhabitants had been rebellious (see 2 Kings 17). This replacing of rebellious subjects by other unrelated rebellious subjects supposedly would discourage other insurrections and make further revolt difficult. The Babylonians on

the other hand did not shift rebellious subjects around but rather sent all deported peoples to a central location, the land of Babylon, thus leaving a vacuum in the respective homelands, allowing deportees eventually to return when the Babylonian Empire collapsed. For this and other reasons the Northern Kingdom deportees could not return to their homeland, but the Jews of the Southern Kingdom could return from the Babylonian captivity.

23. For example, the Babylonian calendar is still used today by Jewish people.

24. We can gain some idea of how long a "long time" was by looking at verse 76, where it is said that during the penultimate period of the allegory the Lord of the vineyard would gather good fruit "for a long time." I will argue below that this period is the Millennium. Accepting this interpretation would indicate that "a long time" is to be measured in centuries and not in decades.

25. Some exegetes of this allegory have found only three transplanted branches, taking for their reason verse 39, where the first, second, and the last natural branches are mentioned. This explanation disregards the four branches clearly set off with "behold these" in verse 20, "look hither" in verse 23, "look hither" in verse 24, and "look hither" in verse 25, and ignores the possibility of an extended polar merism in verse 39. The distinct parallelism between 20, 23, 24 and 25 cannot be overlooked because these last three verses are the only verses in the standard works that contain the phrase "look hither." To do away with the parallel in verse 24 and combine it with verse 25 would do violence to the poetic structure of the passage. It is possible as some have suggested that there are four in verses 20 through 25, but only three in verse 39 because two of the transplants, the Lehitites and the Mulekites, were combined by this time. However, whether there are three or four transplanted trees is not relevant to this discussion. Certainly, the question of how many transplants is bound together with the question of whom the transplants represent.

26. *Living Truths from the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Sunday School Union, 1970), 122–23.

27. There is a slight discrepancy in the time here, if the allegory is seen as strictly consistent and chronologically exacting. (R. Wilson, 38–39, also noted this apparent inconsistency.) The period in the Old World when the mother tree (with Gentiles grafted in) bore nothing but good fruit must be placed between A.D. 35 and 100. Yet during this period the majority of the Jews rejected Jesus Christ and his message. This same time period in the New World saw *all* the people "converted unto the Lord, upon all the face of the land" (4 Nephi 1:2).

This discrepancy exists only because, with the advantage of hindsight, we want to impose on the Near Eastern allegory our occidental training that insists on logical, consistent, and chronological interpretations. The telescoping of time and the less-than-sharp depth of field of received versions of prophetic foresight should certainly allow us to view these episodes as accurate, general characterizations of the historical periods discussed. Thus we see in Book of Mormon history from roughly 600 B.C. to A.D. 400 the division of this transplanted branch of the house of Israel into the righteous and the apostate cultures. (For this same interpretation see Jackson, "Nourished by the Good Word of God," 192.) The only exception to this is a short interlude when the Nephites and Lamanites became one people between approximately A.D. 36 and about A.D. 190 (4 Nephi 19–21), about 155 years, not the traditional two hundred years often cited by Latter-day Saints. The New Testament, on the other hand, if we ignore the Jews and Gentiles who rejected Christ and his messengers, presents a fairly unified and righteous community of Israelites and Gentiles, notwithstanding cultural rifts and the early signs of apostasy that gave rise to Paul's polemics.

28. If the allegory is to be taken literally in all respects, it would not be the first time God had threatened to destroy all the inhabitants of the earth (Genesis 6:7) or all of his chosen people (Exodus 32:9–11).

29. The servant's offer of advice here should not be taken as inappropriate. Servants are supposed to offer advice. Yet it would be inappropriate to assume from this section of the allegory that God can be moved out of his purposes by typical Near Eastern market haggling. (This would apply also to Abraham haggling with God over Sodom and Gomorrah.) God allows his servants room within his purposes to think they are haggling, but his designs are already set and their supposed haggling has already been calculated into the design.

30. For a different way of expressing this care God has given to the world, see Alma 29:8.

31. *Ensign* 16 (May 1986): 78.

32. Joseph Smith, Jr., *The History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, B. H. Roberts, ed., 2d rev. ed., 7 vols (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1957), 2:118.

33. Ezra Taft Benson, *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988), 84.

34. Spencer W. Kimball expressed this same idea: "The apostasy came not through persecution, but by relinquishment of faith caused by the superimposing of a man-made structure upon and over the

divine program," as quoted in Edward L. Kimball, ed., *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982), 425.

35. The process is so simple and so easy that many refuse to let its influence heal them. See 1 Nephi 17:41–42.

6

Jacob 4–6: Substantive Textual Variants between Manuscripts and Editions

Royal Skousen

This computerized collation of Jacob 4–6 is based on the original manuscript (where extant), the printer’s manuscript, the first three editions of the Book of Mormon (1830, 1837, and 1840), and the 1981 edition of the Book of Mormon. The base text for this collation is the 1981 edition; all substantive variants between the 1981 edition and the other five sources are shown. The collation ignores accidental variants (spelling variation, capitalization, and punctuation that make no difference in meaning).

Recent work on the Wilford Wood fragments of the original manuscript has led to the discovery of 11 fragments from Jacob 4–6, the only portions of the original manuscript of these chapters known to exist. These fragments come from two different types of paper, which implies that these fragments come from two different gatherings of sheets. A fragment at the end of Jacob 6 gives page number 111, which allows us to determine the probable pagination for all these fragments from Jacob 4–6:

Pages	Verses	Number of Fragments
101–2	4:3–5, 4:13–14	2
107–8	5:46–48, 5:57–58, 60	3
109–10	5:69–70, 5:77–6:0	3
111–12	6:11–7:6, 7:11–18	4

These few fragments do not provide any evidence of change in the Book of Mormon text. In a number of instances, however, they do provide support for readings found in the printer's manuscript and the 1830 edition that were changed in later editions of the Book of Mormon.

In the following collation, the various forms of a given variant appear in bold, surrounded by square brackets [] and separated by a vertical slash |. Each form is followed by a space and a list of the sources having that form. Single numbers and letters are used to represent the various sources:

0	original manuscript (where extant)
1	printer's manuscript
A	1830 edition
B	1837 edition
C	1840 edition
Q	1981 edition

Thus [**was 1A | is BCQ**] means that the word *was* occurs in the printer's manuscript and the 1830 edition; in the other three editions *was* is replaced by *is*. If there is only a blank space before the source listing, then the form is completely lacking in those sources. Thus [**ye 1 | ABCQ**] means that *ye* occurs in the printer's manuscript but is missing in all four printed editions included in this collation. Underlining is used to represent changes made in the printer's manuscript by a later corrector, not Oliver Cowdery. All but a few of these changes were made by Joseph Smith for the 1837 edition and are found in his hand. A question mark after 0 means that the assumption of how the original manuscript read is based on indirect evidence, such as spacing considerations and scribal tendencies.

Certain symbols are used to represent the text of either the original or the printer's manuscript:

x	<i>x</i> has been inserted between words
^	insertion mark that appears in the text
\x/	<i>x</i> has been inserted above the line of text
/x\	<i>x</i> has been inserted below the line of text
<x>	<i>x</i> has been deleted by crossout
<%x%>	<i>x</i> has been deleted by erasure
{x y}	<i>x</i> has been overwritten by <i>y</i>
{x}	<i>x</i> has been partially overwritten by <i>x</i>
-	hyphenation mark
x(-)	the letter <i>x</i> is missing a stroke
x(+)	the letter <i>x</i> has an extra stroke
[]	text is completely illegible
[x]	<i>x</i> is partially legible
[x y]	the letter may be <i>x</i> or <i>y</i> , with <i>x</i> preferred
()	a lacuna (a portion of the manuscript is missing)
(x)	<i>x</i> is partially missing due to a lacuna

JACOB 4-6

CHAPTER [III 1ABC | 4 Q] NOW behold, it came to pass that I, Jacob, having ministered much unto my people in word, (and I cannot write but [| a | 1 | a ABCQ] little of my words, because of the difficulty of engraving our words upon plates) and we know that the things which we write upon plates must remain; (2) But whatsoever things we write upon anything save it be upon plates must perish and vanish away; but we can write a few words upon plates, which will give our children, and also our beloved brethren, a small degree of knowledge concerning us, or concerning their fathers—(3) Now in this thing we do rejoice; and we labor diligently to engraven these words upon plates, hoping that our beloved brethren and our children will receive them with thankful hearts, and look upon them that they may learn with joy and not with sorrow, neither with contempt, concerning their first parents. (4) For, for this intent have we written these things, that

they may know that we knew of Christ, and we had a hope of his glory many hundred years before his coming; and not only we ourselves had a hope of his glory, but also all the holy prophets which were before us. (5) Behold, they believed in Christ and worshiped the Father in his name, and also we worship the Father in his name. And for this intent we keep the law of Moses, it pointing our souls to him; and for this cause it is sanctified unto us for righteousness, even as it was accounted unto Abraham in the wilderness to be obedient unto the commands of God in offering up his son Isaac, which [**was 1A | is BCQ**] a similitude of God and his Only Begotten Son. (6) Wherefore, we search the prophets, and we have many revelations and the spirit of prophecy; and having all these witnesses we obtain a hope, and our faith becometh unshaken, insomuch that we truly can command in the name of Jesus and the very trees obey us, or the mountains, or the waves of the sea. (7) Nevertheless, the Lord God [**sheweth 1ABC | showeth Q**] us our weakness that we may know that it is by his grace, and his great condescensions unto the children of men, that we have power to do these things. (8) Behold, great and marvelous are the works of the Lord. How unsearchable are the depths of the mysteries of him; and it is impossible that man should find out all his ways. And no man knoweth of his ways save it be revealed unto him; wherefore, brethren, despise not the revelations of God. (9) For behold, by the power of his word man came upon the face of the earth, which earth was created by the power of his word. Wherefore, if God being able to speak and the world was, and to speak and man was [**^ \created/ 1 | created ABCQ**], O then, why not able to command the earth, or the workmanship of his hands upon the face of it, according to his will and plea-

sure? (10) Wherefore, brethren, seek not to counsel the Lord, but to take counsel from his hand. For behold, ye yourselves know that he counseleth in wisdom, and in justice, and in great mercy, over all his works. (11) Wherefore, beloved [[^]\brethren/ 1 | brethren ABCQ], be reconciled unto him through the atonement of Christ, his Only Begotten Son, [that 1A | and BCQ] ye may obtain a resurrection, according to the power of the resurrection which is in Christ, and be presented as the first-fruits of Christ unto God, having faith, and obtained a good hope of glory in him before he manifesteth himself in the flesh. (12) And now, beloved, marvel not that I tell you these things; for why not speak of the atonement of Christ, and attain to a perfect knowledge of him, as to attain to the knowledge of a resurrection and the world to come? (13) Behold, my brethren, he that prophesieth, let him prophesy to the understanding of men; for the Spirit speaketh the truth and lieth not. Wherefore, it speaketh of things as they really are, and of things as they really will be; wherefore, these things are manifested unto us plainly, for the salvation of our souls. But behold, we are not witnesses alone in these things; for God also spake them unto prophets of old. (14) But behold, the Jews were a stiffnecked people; and they despised the words of plainness, and killed the prophets, and sought for things that they could not understand. Wherefore, because of their blindness, which blindness came by looking beyond the mark, they must needs fall; for God hath taken away his plainness from them, and delivered unto them many things which they cannot understand, because they desired it. And because they desired it God hath done it, that they may stumble. (15) And now I, Jacob, am led on by the Spirit unto prophesying; for I perceive by the workings of the Spirit which is in

me, that by the stumbling of the Jews they will reject the stone upon which they might build and have safe foundation. (16) But behold, according to the scriptures, this stone shall become the great, and the last, and the only sure foundation, upon which the Jews can build. (17) And now, my beloved, how is it possible that these, after having rejected the sure foundation, can ever build upon it, that it may become the head of their corner? (18) Behold, my beloved brethren, I will unfold this mystery unto you; if I do not, by any means, get shaken from my firmness in the Spirit, and stumble because of my over anxiety for you.

[1ABC | CHAPTER 5 Q] BEHOLD, my brethren, do ye not remember to have read the words of the prophet Zenos, which [1ABC | he Q] spake unto the house of Israel, saying: (2) Hearken, O ye house of Israel, and hear the words of me, a prophet of the Lord. (3) For behold, thus saith the Lord, I will liken thee, O house of Israel, like unto a tame olive-tree, which a man took and nourished in his vineyard; and it grew, and waxed old, and began to decay. (4) And it came to pass that the master of the vineyard went forth, and he saw that his olive-tree began to decay; and he [<sayeth> \sai{<th> | d/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ]: I will prune it, and dig about it, and nourish it, that perhaps it may shoot forth young and tender branches, and it perish not. (5) And it came to pass that he pruned it, and digged about it, and nourished it according to his word. (6) And it came to pass that after many days it began to put forth somewhat a little, young and tender branches; but behold, the main top thereof began to perish. (7) And it came to pass that the master of the vineyard saw it, and he [<sayeth> \said/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ] unto his servant: It grieveth me that I should lose this tree; wherefore, go and pluck the branches from a wild olive-

tree, and bring them hither unto me; and we will pluck off those main branches which are beginning to wither away, and we will cast them into the fire that they may be burned. (8) And behold, saith the Lord of the vineyard, I take away many of these young and tender branches, and I will graft them whithersoever I will; and it mattereth not that if it so be that the root of this tree will perish, I may preserve the fruit thereof unto myself; wherefore, I will take these young and tender branches, and I will graft them whithersoever I will. (9) Take thou the branches of the wild olive-tree, and graft them in, in the stead thereof; and these which I have plucked off I will cast into the fire and burn them, that they may not cumber the ground of my vineyard. (10) And it came to pass that the servant of the Lord of the vineyard [**done 1A | did BCQ**] according to the word of the Lord of the vineyard, and grafted in the branches of the wild olive-tree. (11) And the Lord of the vineyard caused that it should be digged about, and pruned, and nourished, saying unto his servant: It grieveth me that I should lose this tree; wherefore, that perhaps I might preserve the roots thereof that they perish not, that I might preserve them unto myself, I have done this thing. (12) Wherefore, go thy way; watch the tree, and nourish it, according to my words. (13) And these will I place in the [**ni -thermost 1 | nethermost ABCQ**] part of my vineyard, whithersoever I will, it mattereth not unto thee; and I do it that I may preserve unto myself the natural branches of the tree; and also, that I may lay up fruit thereof against the season, unto myself; for it grieveth me that I should lose this tree and the fruit thereof. (14) And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard went his way, and hid the natural branches of the tame olive-tree in the [**nithermost 1 | nethermost ABCQ**] parts of the vineyard, some in one and

some in another, according to his will and pleasure. (15) And it came to pass that a long time passed away, and the Lord of the vineyard [**<sayeth> \said/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ**] unto his servant: Come, let us go down into the vineyard, that we may labor in the vineyard. (16) And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard, and also the servant, went down into the vineyard to labor. And it came to pass that the servant [**<sayeth> \said/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ**] unto his master: Behold, look here; behold the tree. (17) And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard looked and beheld the tree in the which the wild olive branches had been grafted; and it had [**sprang 1ABC | sprung Q**] forth and [**began 1ABC | begun Q**] to bear fruit. And he beheld that it was good; and the fruit thereof was like unto the natural fruit. (18) And he [**<sayeth> \said/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ**] unto the servant: Behold, the branches of the wild tree [**<have^> \hath/ 1 | hath ABC | have Q**] taken hold of the moisture of the root thereof, that the root thereof hath brought forth much strength; and because of the much strength of the root thereof the wild branches [**<hath> \have/ 1 | hath A | have BCQ**] brought forth tame fruit. Now, if we had not grafted in these branches, the tree thereof would have perished. And now, behold, I shall lay up much fruit, which the tree thereof hath brought forth; and the fruit thereof I shall lay up against the season, unto mine own self. (19) And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard [**<sayeth> \said/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ**] unto the servant: Come, let us go to the [**nithermost 1 | nethermost ABCQ**] [**parts 1 | part ABCQ**] of the vineyard, and behold if the natural branches of the tree [**hath 1ABC | have Q**] not brought forth much fruit also, that I may lay up of the fruit thereof against the season, unto mine own self. (20) And it came to

pass that they went forth whither the master [[^]\of the vineyard/ 1 | of the vineyard A | BCQ] had hid the natural branches of the tree, and he [_<sa[^]yeth> \said/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ] unto the servant: Behold these; and he beheld the first that it had brought forth much fruit; and he beheld also that it was good. And he [_<sayeth> \said/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ] unto the servant: Take of the fruit thereof, and lay it up against the season, that I may preserve it unto mine own self; for behold, [_<sayeth> \said/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ] he, this long time have I nourished it, and it hath brought forth much [[^]\fruit/ 1 | fruit ABCQ]. (21) And it came to pass that the servant [sayeth 1A | said BCQ] unto his master: How comest thou hither to plant this tree, or this branch of the tree? For behold, it was the poorest spot in all the land of [thy 1ABQ | the C] vineyard. (22) And the Lord of the vineyard [s_<ayeth>h \said/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ] unto him: Counsel me not; I knew that it was a poor spot of ground; wherefore, I said unto thee, I have nourished it this long time, and thou beholdest that it hath brought forth much fruit. (23) And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard [_<sayeth> \said/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ] unto his servant: Look hither; behold I have planted another branch [[^]\of the {h | tr}ee/ 1 | of the tree ABCQ] also; and thou knowest that this spot of ground was poorer [then 1 | than ABCQ] the first. But, behold the tree. I have nourished it this long time, and it hath brought forth much fruit; therefore, gather it, and lay it up against the season, that I may preserve it unto mine own self. (24) And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard [_<sayeth> \said/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ] again unto his servant: Look hither, and behold another branch also, which I have planted; behold that I have nourished [1 | it ABCQ] also, and it hath

brought forth fruit. (25) And he [**s<ayeth> \said/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ**] unto the servant: Look hither and behold the last. Behold, this have I planted in a good spot of ground; and I have nourished it this long time, and only a part of the tree hath brought forth tame fruit, and the other part of the tree hath brought forth wild fruit; behold, I have nourished this tree like unto the others. (26) And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard [**<sayeth> \said/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ**] unto the servant: Pluck off the branches that have not brought forth good fruit, and cast them into the fire. (27) But behold, the servant [**<sayeth> \said/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ**] unto him: Let us prune it, and dig about it, and nourish it a little longer, that perhaps it may bring forth good fruit unto thee, that thou canst lay it up against the season. (28) And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard and the servant of the Lord of the vineyard did nourish all the fruit of the vineyard. (29) And it came to pass that a long time had passed away, and the Lord of the vineyard [**<sayeth> \said/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ**] unto his servant: Come, let us go down [**in 1 | into ABCQ**] the vineyard, that we may labor again in the vineyard. For behold, the time draweth near, and the end soon cometh; wherefore, I must lay up fruit against the season, unto mine own self. (30) And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard and the servant went down into the vineyard; and they came to the tree whose natural branches had been broken off, and the wild branches had been grafted in; and behold all sorts of fruit did cumber the tree. (31) And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard did taste of the fruit, every sort according to its number. And the Lord of the vineyard [**sa <-it^h> \sai(-)d/ 1 | saith A | said BCQ**]: Behold, this long time have we nourished this tree, and I have laid up unto

myself against the season much fruit. (32) But behold, this time it hath brought forth much fruit, and there is none of it which is good. And behold, there are all kinds of bad fruit; and it profiteth me nothing, notwithstanding all our labor; and now it grieveth me that I should lose this tree. (33) And the Lord of the vineyard [**sayeth 1A | said BCQ**] unto the servant: What shall we do unto the tree, that I may preserve again good fruit thereof unto mine own self? (34) And the servant [**<sayeth> \said/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ**] unto his master: Behold, because thou didst graft in the branches of the wild olive-tree they have nourished the roots, that they are alive and they have not perished; wherefore thou beholdest that they are yet good. (35) And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard [**<sayeth> \said/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ**] unto his servant: The tree profiteth me nothing, and the roots thereof [**profiteth 1ABC | profit Q**] me nothing so long as it shall bring forth evil fruit. (36) Nevertheless, I know that the roots are good, and for mine own purpose I have preserved them; and because of their much strength they have hitherto brought forth, from the wild branches, good fruit. (37) But behold, the wild branches have [**<grew^> \grown/ 1 | grown ABCQ**] and have [**overran 1ABC | overrun Q**] the roots thereof; and because that the wild branches have overcome the roots thereof it hath brought forth much evil fruit; and because that it hath brought forth so much evil fruit thou [**beheldest 1 | beholdest ABCQ**] that it beginneth to perish; and it will soon become ripened, that it may be cast into the fire, except we should do something for it to preserve it. (38) And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard [**sayeth 1A | said BCQ**] unto his servant: Let us go down into the [**nithermost 1 | nethermost ABCQ**] parts of the vineyard, and behold if the natural

branches have also brought forth evil fruit. (39) And it came to pass that they went down into the **[nither -most 1 | nethermost ABCQ]** parts of the vineyard. And it came to pass that they beheld that the fruit of the natural branches had become corrupt also; yea, the first and the second and also the last; and they had all become corrupt. (40) And the wild fruit of the last had overcome that part of the tree which brought forth good fruit, even that the branch had withered away and died. (41) And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard wept, and **[<sayeth> \said/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ]** unto the servant: What could I have done more for my vineyard? (42) Behold, I knew that all the fruit of the vineyard, save it were these, had become corrupted. And now these which have once brought forth good fruit have also become corrupted; and now all the trees of my vineyard are good for nothing save it be to be hewn down and cast into the fire. (43) And behold this last, whose branch hath withered away, I did plant in a good spot of ground; yea, even that which was choice unto me above all other parts of the land of my vineyard. (44) And thou **[beh{o|e}ldest 1 | beheldest ABCQ]** that I also cut down that which cumbered this spot of ground, that I might plant this tree in the stead thereof. (45) And thou **[beh{o|e}ldest 1 | beheldest ABCQ]** that a part thereof brought forth good fruit, and **[the 1 | a ABCQ]** part thereof brought forth wild fruit; and because **[<th[a]t> 1 | that ABC | Q]** I plucked not the branches thereof and cast them into the fire, behold, they have overcome the good branch that it **[<ha^th> \has/ 1 | hath ABCQ]** withered away. (46) And now, behold, notwithstanding all the care which we have taken of my vineyard, the trees thereof **[<hath> \have/ 1 | hath AB | have CQ]** become corrupted, that they bring forth no

good fruit; and these I [**<h[av]>e^ \had/ 1 | had ABCQ**] [**hope | d | 1 | hope AB | hoped CQ**] to preserve, to have laid up fruit thereof against the season, unto mine own self. But, behold, they have become like unto the wild olive-tree, and they are of no worth but to be hewn down and cast into the fire; and it grieveth me that I should lose them. (47) But what could I have done more in my vineyard? Have I slackened mine hand, that I have not nourished it? Nay, I have nourished it, and I have digged [**0?A | ^\about/ 1 | about BCQ**] it, and I have pruned it, and I have dunged it; and I have stretched forth mine hand almost all the day long, and the end draweth nigh. And it grieveth me that I should hew down all the trees of my vineyard, and cast them into the fire that they should be burned. Who is it that [**<hath> \ha{s | s}/ 1 | hath A | has BCQ**] corrupted my vineyard? (48) And it came to pass that the servant [**<sayeth> \said/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ**] unto his master: Is it not the loftiness of thy vineyard— [**<hat^h> \has/ 1 | Hath A | Has B | Have C | have Q**] not the branches thereof [**overcame 1A | overcome BCQ**] the roots which are good? And because [**<t[hat]> 1 | that A | BCQ**] the branches have [**overc{[a] | o}me 1 | overcame A | overcome BCQ**] the roots thereof, [(r) 0 | **<for> 1 | For A | BCQ**] behold they grew faster [**than 0ABCQ | then 1**] the strength of the roots [**<t[h]e[r]e[o]f> 1 | thereof A | BCQ**], taking strength unto themselves. Behold, I say, is not this the cause that the trees of thy vineyard [**hath 0A | <hath> \have/ 1 | have BCQ**] become corrupted? (49) And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard [**<sayeth> \sa | i | d/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ**] unto the servant: Let us go to and hew down the trees of the vineyard and cast them into the fire, that they shall not cumber the ground of my vineyard, for I have done all. What could I

have done more for my vineyard? (50) But, behold, the servant [<saith> \said/ 1 | saith A | said BCQ] unto the Lord of the vineyard: Spare it a little longer. (51) And the Lord [<saith> \said/ 1 | saith A | said BCQ]: Yea, I will spare it a little longer, for it grieveth me that I should lose the trees of my vineyard. (52) Wherefore, let us take of the branches of these which I have planted in the [nithermost 1 | nethermost ABCQ] parts of my vineyard, and let us graft them into the tree from whence they came; and let us pluck from the tree those branches whose fruit is most bitter, and graft in the natural branches of the tree in the stead thereof. (53) And this will I do that the tree may not perish, that, perhaps, I may preserve unto myself the roots thereof for mine own purpose. (54) And, behold, the roots of the natural branches of the tree which I planted whithersoever I would are yet alive; wherefore, that I may preserve them also for mine own purpose, I will take of the branches of this tree, and I will graft them in unto them. Yea, I will graft in unto them the branches of their mother tree, that I may preserve the roots also unto mine own self, that when they shall be sufficiently strong [<t[hat]> 1 | that A | BCQ] perhaps they may bring forth good fruit unto me, and I [^may/ 1 | may ABCQ] yet have glory in the fruit of my vineyard. (55) And it came to pass that they took from the natural tree which had become wild, and grafted in unto the natural trees, which also had become wild. (56) And they also took of the natural trees which had become wild, and grafted into their mother tree. (57) And the Lord of the vineyard [s<ayeth> \said/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ] unto the servant: Pluck not the wild branches from the trees, save it be those [<that> ^ \which/ 1 | which ABCQ] are most bitter; and in them ye shall graft according to that which I have said. (58) And

we will nourish again the trees of the vineyard, and we will trim up the branches thereof; and we will pluck from the trees those branches which are ripened, that must perish, and cast them into the fire. (59) And this I do that, perhaps, the roots thereof may take strength because of their goodness; and because of the [**<cha[n]^{c | g}e> \change/ 1 | change ABCQ**] of the branches, that the good may overcome the evil. (60) And because that I have preserved the natural branches and the roots thereof, and that I have grafted in the natural branches again into their mother tree, and have preserved the roots of their mother tree, that, perhaps, the trees of my vineyard may bring forth again good fruit; and that I may have joy again in the fruit of my vineyard, and, perhaps, that I may rejoice exceedingly that I have preserved the roots and the branches of the first fruit—(61) Wherefore, go to, and call servants, that we may labor diligently with our [**mights 1ABC | might Q**] in the vineyard, that we may prepare the way, that I may bring forth again the natural fruit, which natural fruit is good and the most precious above all other fruit. (62) Wherefore, let us go to and labor with our [**mights 1ABC | might Q**] this last time, for behold the end draweth nigh, and this is for the last time that I shall prune my vineyard. (63) Graft in the branches; begin at the last that they may be first, and that the first may be last, and dig about the trees, both old and young, the first and the last; and the last and the first, that all may be nourished once again for the last time. (64) Wherefore, dig about them, and prune them, and dung them once more, for the last time, for the end draweth [**nigh<t(-)> 1 | nigh ABCQ**]. And if it [**so be 1ABC | be so Q**] that these last grafts shall grow, and bring forth the natural fruit, then shall ye prepare the way for them, that they may grow.

(65) And as they begin to grow ye shall clear away the branches which bring forth bitter fruit, according to the strength of the good and the size thereof; and ye shall not clear away the bad [**&^ the ^sis^e the^reof & ye^ shall ^not clear a^way t(-)h(-)> 1 | ABCQ**] [**|ther| \-eof/ 1 | thereof ABCQ**] [**\all at once/ 1 | all at once ABCQ**], [**\lest the roots thereof should/ 1 | lest the roots thereof should ABCQ**] be too strong for the graft, and the graft thereof shall perish, and I lose the trees of my vineyard.

(66) For it grieveth me that I should lose the trees of my vineyard; wherefore ye shall clear away the bad according as the good shall grow, that the root and the top may be equal in strength, until the good shall overcome the bad, and the bad be hewn down and cast into the fire, that they cumber not the ground of my vineyard; and thus will I sweep away the bad out of my vineyard. (67) And the branches of the natural tree will I graft in again into the natural tree; (68) And the branches of the natural tree will I graft into the natural branches of the [**<natu[r]a> 1 | ABCQ**] tree; and thus will I bring them together again, that they shall bring forth the natural fruit, and they shall be one. (69) And [**<they> \<the>/ the 1 | the ABCQ**] bad shall be cast away, yea, even out of all the land of my vineyard; for behold, only this once will I prune my vineyard. (70) And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard sent his servant; and the servant went and did as the Lord had commanded him, and brought other servants; and they were few. (71) And the Lord of the vineyard [**<sa^ith> \said/ 1 | saith A | said BCQ**] unto [**<him^> \them/ 1 | them ABCQ**]: Go to, and labor in the vineyard, with your [**mights 1ABC | might Q**]. For behold, this is the last time that I shall nourish my vineyard; for the end is nigh at hand, and the season [**<soo^n> \speedily/ 1 | speedily**]

ABCQ] cometh; and if ye labor with your [**mights**
1ABC | might Q] with me ye shall have joy in the fruit
 [<of> 1 | **ABCQ]** which I shall lay up [<for>^ \unto/
 1 | **unto ABCQ]** myself against the time which will soon
 come. (72) And it came to pass that the servants did go
 [<t[o] i[t]> 1 | **to it A | BCQ]** and labor with their mights;
 and the Lord of the vineyard labored also with them; and
 they did obey the commandments of the Lord of the vine-
 yard in all things. (73) And there began to be the natural
 fruit again in the vineyard; and the natural branches began
 to grow and thrive exceedingly; and the wild branches
 began to be plucked off and to be cast away; and they did
 keep the root and the top thereof equal, according to the
 strength thereof. (74) And thus they labored, with all dili-
 gence, according to the commandments of the Lord of the
 vineyard, even until the bad had been cast away out of the
 vineyard, and the Lord had preserved unto himself that
 the trees had become again the natural fruit; and they
 became like unto one body; and the [**fr -uit 1 | fruit**
ABC | fruits Q] were equal; and the Lord of the vineyard
 had preserved unto himself the natural fruit, which was
 most precious unto him from the beginning. (75) And it
 came to pass that when the Lord of the vineyard saw that
 his fruit was good, and that his vineyard was no more cor-
 rupt, he [**calle{t[h] | d} 1 | calleth A | called BCQ]** up his
 servants, and [**<sayeth> \said/ 1 | sayeth A | said BCQ]**
 unto them: Behold, for this last time have we nourished
 my vineyard; and thou beholdest that I have done accord-
 ing to my will; and I have preserved the natural fruit, that
 it is good, even like as it was in the beginning. And
 blessed art thou; for because [**<t^h{ou | at}> \<t[h]at>/**
1 | that A | BCQ] ye have been diligent in laboring with me
 in my vineyard, and have kept my commandments, and

[<hath> \have/ 1 | hath A | have BCQ] brought unto me again the natural fruit, that my vineyard is no more corrupted, and the bad is cast away, behold ye shall have joy with me because of the fruit of my vineyard. (76) For behold, for a long time [[^]\will/ 1 | will ABCQ] I lay up of the fruit of my vineyard unto mine own self against the season, which speedily cometh; and for the last time have I nourished my vineyard, and pruned it, and dug about it, and dunged it; wherefore I will lay up unto mine own self of the fruit, for a long time, according to that which I have spoken. (77) And when the time cometh that evil fruit shall again come into my vineyard, then will I cause the good and the bad to be gathered; and the good will I preserve unto myself, and the bad will I cast away into its own place. And then cometh the season and the end; and my vineyard will I cause to be burned with fire.

CHAPTER [IIII 1 | IV ABC | 6 Q] AND now, [[^]\behold/ 1 | behold ABCQ], my brethren, as I said unto you that I would prophesy, behold, this is my prophecy—that the things which this [[^]\Prophet/ 1 | prophet ABCQ] Zenos spake, concerning the house of Israel, in the which he likened them unto a tame olive-tree, must surely come to pass. (2) And [in 1ABC | Q] the day that he shall set his hand again the second time to recover his people, is the day, yea, even the last time, that the servants of the Lord shall go forth in his power, to nourish and prune his vineyard; and after that the end soon cometh. (3) And how blessed are they who have labored diligently in his vineyard; and how cursed are they [<which> \who/ 1 | which A | who BCQ] shall be cast out into their own place! And the world shall be burned with fire. (4) And how merciful is our God unto us, for he remembereth the house of Israel, both roots and branches; and he stretches forth his

hands unto them all the day long; and they are a stiff-necked and a gainsaying people; but as many as will not harden their hearts shall be saved in the kingdom of God. (5) Wherefore, my beloved brethren, I beseech of you in words of soberness that ye would repent, and come with full purpose of heart, and cleave unto God as he cleaveth unto you. And while his arm of mercy is extended towards you in the light of the day, harden not your hearts. (6) Yea, today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts; for why will ye die? (7) For behold, after [**<that> 1 | that A | BCQ**] ye have been nourished by the good word of God all the day long, will ye bring forth evil fruit, that ye must be hewn down and cast into the fire? (8) Behold, will ye reject these words? Will ye reject the words of the prophets; and will ye reject all the words which have been spoken concerning Christ, after [**<th[a]t> 1 | that A | BCQ**] so many have spoken concerning him; and deny the good word of Christ, and the power of God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, and quench the Holy Spirit, and make a mock of the great plan of redemption, which hath been laid for you? (9) Know ye not that if ye will do these things, that the power of the redemption and the resurrection, which is in Christ, will bring you to stand with shame and awful guilt before the bar of God? (10) And according to the power of justice, for justice cannot be denied, [**<t[ha]t> 1 | That A | BCQ**] ye must go away into [**[th{e | a}t 1 | that ABCQ**] lake of fire and brimstone, whose flames are unquenchable, and whose smoke ascendeth up forever and ever, which lake of fire and brimstone is endless torment. (11) O then, my beloved brethren, repent ye, and enter [**[ye 01 | ABCQ**] in at the [**[strait 01Q | straight ABC**] gate, and continue in the way which is narrow, until ye shall obtain eternal life. (12) O be wise; what can I say

more? (13) Finally, I bid you farewell, until I shall meet you before the [[^]\pleasing/ 0? | pleasing 1ABCQ] bar of God, which bar striketh the wicked with awful dread and fear. Amen.

NOTES ON THE SUBSTANTIVE VARIANTS BETWEEN TEXTS

The following symbols are used to show changes from one text to another:

- T₁ > T₂ the change from one text (T₁) to another (T₂); the specific differences are shown in italics, and only the changed portions in T₂ are shown
- ^ the italicized text in T₂ has been inserted here in T₁
- ∅ the italicized text in T₁ has been deleted in T₂
- \x/ supralinear insertion of *x*
- <x> deletion of *x*

- I. Changes in the chapter system: For the 1879 edition, Orson Pratt broke up the larger chapters of the original text. Thus the original chapter III is split up into chapters 4 and 5. This collation therefore includes both chapters 4 and 5. Chapter 6 (originally chapter IV) is also included because it contains Jacob's commentary on Zenos's allegory.
- II. Indirect evidence for insertion in the original manuscript (O) and copied correctly in producing the printer's manuscript (P)

6:13 until I shall meet you before the [^] bar of God >
pleasing
[There is no room for *pleasing* in O except by supralinear insertion. Oliver Cowdery (OC) probably first wrote the more expected expression

“before the bar of God”, which he then corrected by inserting the unexpected word *pleasing*.]

III. Initial error by OC in transcribing from O to P, corrected immediately or soon thereafter by OC to conform to O

A. Initial error makes sense

4:1 and I cannot write but ^ little of my words
> *a*

4:9 wherefore if God being able to speak and the world was and to speak and man was ^ O then why not able to command the earth > *created*

5:18 behold the branches of the wild tree *have* taken hold of the moisture of the root thereof > *hath*

5:20 and it came to pass that they went forth whither the master ^ had hid the natural branches of the tree > *of the vineyard*

5:20 and it hath brought forth much ^ > *fruit*

5:23 behold I have planted another branch ^ also > *of the tree*

5:37 but behold the wild branches have *grew* and have overran the roots thereof > *grown*

5:54 that perhaps they may bring forth good fruit unto me and I ^ yet have glory in the fruit of my vineyard > *may*

5:57 save it be those *that* are most bitter > *which*

5:71 and the lord of the vineyard saith unto *him* > *them*

[The context here is semantically ambiguous: Is the Lord still speaking to the one servant alone (as before) or is he now speaking to the group of servants? It seems that *them* is the correct reading. The most plausible explana-

tion for why OC first wrote *him* is that there has always been only a single servant up to this point and OC is therefore used to writing a singular referent after *sayeth/saith*, as in 5:22, 27. Another possible explanation is that O itself may have had *him*, an error due to identical unstressed pronunciations of *him* and *them*.]

5:71 and the season *soon* cometh > *speedily*

5:71 ye shall have joy in the fruit of which I shall lay up > Ø

5:71 which I shall lay up *for* myself > *unto*

5:75 and blessed art thou for because <thou> \that/ ye have been diligent

[First *thou* is written (probably because of the preceding *thou*), then crossed out and replaced by *that*, which is then followed by *ye have*.]

5:76 for behold for a long time ^ I lay up of the fruit of my vineyard > *will*

6:1 and now ^ my brethren > *behold*

6:1 the things which this ^ Zenos spake > *prophet*

6:10 ye must go away into *the* lake of fire and brimstone > *that*

B. Initial error produces an obvious infelicity and needs to be corrected

5:46 and these I *have* hope to preserve to have laid up fruit thereof > *had*

[The overall context here requires the past tense.]

5:59 and because of their goodness and because of the *chance* of the branches > *change*

- 5:64 for the end draweth *night* > *nigh*
- 5:65 ye shall clear away the branches which bring forth bitter fruit according to the strength of the good and the size thereof and ye shall not clear away the bad <and the size thereof and ye shall not clear away the> \thereof all at once lest the roots thereof should/ be too strong for the graft
[Repetition of the preceding line is crossed out and replaced by correct text.]
- 5:68 and the branches of the natural tree will I graft into the natural branches of the *natural* tree > Ø
- 5:69 and they shall be one and <they> the bad shall be cast away
[OC accidentally wrote *they* (probably because of the preceding *they*), then immediately crossed it out and replaced it by *the bad*.]

IV. Subsequent changes

- A. Later editing of P, not in OC's hand, yet the changes appear in the 1830 edition; the corrector's hand here (as well as a few other places in P) has not yet been positively determined
1. Correcting to match O or editing for consistency

4:11 wherefore beloved ^ be reconciled unto him > *brethren*
[The phrase *beloved brethren* is generally used (4:2, 3, 18; 6:5, 11), yet *beloved* without *brethren* occurs in 4:12, 17 as well as originally here in 4:11.]

2. Changing tense to get tense agreement between clauses
 - 5:44 and thou *beholdest* that I also cut down that which cumbered this spot of ground > *beheldest*
 - 5:45 and thou *beholdest* that a part thereof brought forth good fruit > *beheldest*
- B. Changes made by 1830 printer
 1. Minor editing or typographical errors
 - 5:19 come let us go to the nithermost *parts* of the vineyard > *part*
[Cf. use of plural in 5:14, 38, 39, 52; the singular only occurs once, in 5:13—a mistake in P?]
 - 6:11 O then my beloved brethren repent ye and enter *ye* in at the strait gate and continue in the way which is narrow > \emptyset
[This change may represent an attempt to eliminate the repetitive use of *ye*.]
 2. Misinterpretation by printer
 - 5:24 behold that I have nourished ^ also > *it*
[The clause-initial direct object *that* is ignored; *it* is inserted as the direct object.]
 - 6:11 and enter ye in at the *strait* gate and continue in the way which is narrow > *straight*
[OC's spelling *strait* is only accidentally correct since he nearly always spells both *straight* and *strait* as *strait*. Here OC has the spelling *strait* in both O and P.]

3. Removing possible errors in P
 - a) Wrong preposition

5:29 come let us go down *in* the vineyard that we may labor again in the vineyard > *into*

[If P is in error here, this may be due to the influence of the following “in the vineyard”. Of course, *in* can also have the same sense as *into*. The question is whether the Book of Mormon text uses only *into* when motion is implied or whether variation between *in* and *into* occurs. Except for this occurrence of *in*, Zenos’s allegory only has *into* for motion rather than *in*. Cf. 5:15, which is otherwise the same as 5:29 except that the word *again* does not occur: “come let us go down *into* the vineyard that we may labor *in* the vineyard”.]
 - b) Changing tense to get tense agreement between clauses

5:37 thou *beheldest* that it beginneth to perish > *beholdest*

[Cf. above for two unidentified changes in P replacing *beholdest* with *beheldest*.]
 - c) Wrong article

5:45 a part thereof brought forth good fruit and *the* part thereof brought forth wild fruit > *a*

[Could O have read *the other part*?

Cf. 5:25: “and only *a part* of the tree hath brought forth tame fruit and *the other part* of the tree hath brought forth wild fruit”.]

4. Removal of dialect pronunciations

a) *nithermost* > *nethermost*

5:13 and these will I place in the *nithermost* part of my vineyard > *nethermost*

also 5:14, 19, 38, 39, 52

[The *i* vowel alternative dates back to Old English.]

b) conjunction *then* > *than*

5:23 and thou knowest that this spot of ground was poorer *then* the first > *than*

5:48 for behold they grew faster *then* the strength of the roots thereof > *than*

[The reduced vowel pronunciation of *than* as *then* occurs as early as the 12th century. In the second example, OC wrote *than* in O, but *then* in P.]

C. Changes marked by Joseph Smith in P for the 1837 edition

1. Printed as such in 1837 (and subsequent) editions

a) Replacement of the historical present *sayeth/saith* by the past tense form *said*

5:4 and he *sayeth* I will prune it > *said*
also 5:7, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 20, 20, 22,

23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 31, 34, 35, 41,
48, 49, 50, 51, 57, 71, 75

[Use of the historical present
(*saith*) is common in the Greek
New Testament as well as the 1611
King James Version (KJV).]

- b) For consistency, similar removal of his-
torical present for other verbs
5:75 he *calleth* up his servants and
sayeth unto them > *called, said*
- c) Removal of *-th* verb forms in plural
contexts
5:18 the wild branches *hath* brought
forth tame fruit > *have*
5:48 is not this the cause that the trees
of thy vineyard *hath* become cor-
rupted > *have*
[O also has *hath*.]
5:75 for because that ye have been dili-
gent in laboring with me in my
vineyard and have kept my com-
mandments and *hath* brought unto
me again the natural fruit > *have*
[This last change also makes the
text consistent with the two imme-
diately preceding uses of *have*.]
- d) Replacement of *-th* verb forms with *-s*
forms
5:47 who is it that *hath* corrupted my
vineyard > *has*
5:48 *hath* not the branches thereof over-
came the roots which are good >
has

[This last example should have been corrected to *have*; cf. above. In subsequent editions, *has* was changed to *have*, as noted below. O also has *hath*.]

- e) Insertion of preposition
 5:47 I have nourished it and I have digged ^ it and I have pruned it and I have dinged it > *about*
 [This makes the text agree with 5:4, 5, 11, 27, 63, 64, 76 in the use of the phrase *dig about*. O is also probably missing *about*. There is no room for *about* except by supra-linear insertion, and OC nearly always copies insertions into P. Probably O as well as P lack *about*. This missing preposition may represent a primitive error in O itself. Olive tree culture supports the need for the preposition *about* here.]
- f) Replacement of the simple past tense forms of verbs with past participle forms
 5:48 and because that the branches have *overcame* the roots thereof > *overcome*
- g) Removal of *that* when preceded by a conjunction
 5:48 and because *that* the branches have *overcame* the roots thereof > Ø

- 5:75 for because *that* ye have been diligent in laboring with me in my vineyard > Ø
- 6:7 for behold after *that* ye have been nourished by the good word of God > Ø
- 6:8 and will ye reject all the words which have been spoken concerning Christ after *that* so many have spoken concerning him > Ø
- h) Elimination of conjunction in front of *behold*
- 5:48 *for* behold they grew faster than the strength of the roots thereof > Ø
 [Yet *for behold* is kept elsewhere: 4:9, 10; 5:3, 20, 21, 29, 62, 69, 71, 76; 6:7. O also has *for*.]
- i) Removal of *thereof* after a noun
- 5:48 for behold they grew faster than the strength of the roots *thereof* > Ø
 [But nowhere else in Jacob 4–6 is this postnominal use of *thereof* removed: cf. six uses of *thereof* in 5:18.]
- j) Removal of repetitive or unnecessary use of *that*
- 5:54 that I may preserve the roots also unto mine own self that when they shall be sufficiently strong *that* perhaps they may bring forth good fruit unto me > Ø
- 6:10 and according to the power of jus-

tice for justice cannot be denied
that ye must go away into that lake
 of fire and brimstone > Ø

- k) Removal of expression *go to it* (with change in meaning?)
 5:72 and it came to pass that the servants did *go to it* and labor with their mights > Ø
 [Is “go to it” a mistake in P for “go to”? Cf. uses of “go to and” followed by another verb in 5:49, 61, 62, 71; “go and” followed by another verb is found once, in 5:7 (with a more literal sense of *go*). Perhaps only *it* should have been deleted in 5:72.]
- l) Replacement of *which* with *who* for humans
 6:3 and how cursed are they *which* shall be cast out into their own place > *who*
2. Missed by the 1837 edition but occurs corrected in subsequent editions (all in the same place on the same manuscript page of P)
- a) Removal of conjunction followed by *that*
 5:45 and because *that* I plucked not the branches thereof > Ø (1981)
- b) Removal of *-th* verb forms in plural contexts
 5:46 the trees thereof *hath* become corrupted > *have* (1840)

- c) Change of *hope* from noun to verb
5:46 and these I had *hope* to preserve >
hoped (1840)
 - 3. Missed by 1837 and subsequent editions
(also in the same place on the same manu-
script page of P as the preceding three exam-
ples)
Replacement of *-th* verb forms with *-s* forms
5:45 behold they have overcome the good
branch that it *hath* withered away > *has*
- D. Changes accidentally missed by Joseph Smith in P
for 1837 edition, but should have been marked
(since other examples of these changes were
marked); still, these corrections were made in the
1837 edition
 - 1. Replacement of the historical present *sayeth*
/saith by the past tense form *said*
5:21 and it came to pass that the servant
sayeth unto his master > *said*
also 5:33, 38
 - 2. Replacement of simple past tense forms of
verbs with past participle forms
5:48 *hath* not the branches thereof *overcame*
the roots which are good > *overcome*
- E. Changes made in the 1837 edition not marked by
Joseph Smith in P
 - 1. Attempts to avoid possible misinterpretation
of doctrine
4:5 even as it was accounted unto Abra-
ham in the wilderness to be obedient
unto the commands of God in offering
up his son Isaac which *was* a similitude
of God and his only begotten son > *is*

[since the atonement is eternal]

4:11 be reconciled unto him through the atonement of Christ his only begotten son *that* ye may obtain a resurrection according to the power of the resurrection which is in Christ and be presented as the first fruits of Christ unto God > *and*

[This may be an attempt to avoid saying that the resurrection is contingent; but actually the text refers to the resurrection of the first fruits of Christ.]

2. Probable error in typesetting

5:20 and it came to pass that they went forth whither the master *of the vineyard* had hid the natural branches of the tree > Ø
 [The text of Zenos's allegory always has "the master of the vineyard" (5:4, 7, and here), never "the master" alone, although "his master" does occur (5:16, 21, 34, 48); there are a few occurrences of "the lord" alone (5:51, 70, 74), but "the lord of the vineyard" is normal.]

3. Removal of dialectal forms

5:10 and it came to pass that the servant of the lord of the vineyard *done* according to the word of the lord of the vineyard > *did*

F. Changes made in the 1840 edition

1. Probable error in typesetting

5:21 for behold it was the poorest spot in all the land of *thy* vineyard > *the*

[The 1840 edition also accidentally repeats the *the* before *land*.]

2. Agreement with plural
 - 5:48 *hath* not the branches thereof overcame the roots which are good (P, 1830) > *has* (1837) > *have* (1840)
- G. Later editing not found in first three editions (most of these changes are not original with the 1981 edition; many of them are first found in the 1920 edition)
1. Replacement of *shew* by *show*
 - 4:7 nevertheless the Lord God *sheweth* us our weakness > *showeth*
 2. Misinterpretation of *which*
 - 5:1 do ye not remember to have read the words of the prophet Zenos which ^ spake unto the house of Israel saying > *he*

[The *which* here is probably equivalent to the modern day use of *who*; that is, “the words of the prophet Zenos *who* spake unto the house of Israel saying . . .”. Another possibility is that there was a loss of the pronoun *he* in copying P from O. Consider, for example 2 Kings 15:12 (KJV): “This was the word of the Lord which he spake unto Jehu, saying . . .”. Less plausible, in my opinion, is the proposal that the original text represents a literal Hebraism in which the pronoun *he* is understood but not actually stated, as in the Hebrew text for 2 Kings 15:12, in

which the pronoun *he* is not actually present, but is inferred from the verb form alone.]

3. Replacement of simple past tense forms of verbs with past participle forms
 - 5:17 and it had *sprang* forth and *began* to bear fruit > *sprung*, *begun*
 - 5:37 but behold the wild branches have grown and have *overran* the roots thereof > *overrun*
4. Removal of *-th* verb forms in plural contexts
 - 5:18 behold the branches of the wild tree *hath* taken hold of the moisture of the root thereof > *have*
 - 5:19 and behold if the natural branches of the tree *hath* not brought forth much fruit also > *have*
 - 5:35 the tree profiteth me nothing and the roots thereof *profiteth* me nothing > *profit*
5. Replacement of plural *mights* by *might*
 - 5:61 that we may labor diligently with our *mights* in the vineyard > *might*
also 5:62, 71, 71
 - [But this change is not found in 5:72:
“and it came to pass that the servants did go <to it> and labor with their *mights*”.]
6. Change in word order
 - 5:64 and if it *so be* that these last grafts shall grow > *be so*
7. Change of number in noun to agree with plural verb

- 5:74 and they became like unto one body
and the *fruit* were equal > *fruits*
[Here *were* probably should have been
changed to *was* rather than *fruit* to *fruits*
since *fruit* is always used in the singu-
lar (as a mass noun) in Zenos's alle-
gory.]
8. Deletion of preposition to prevent fragment
6:2 and *in* the day that he shall set his hand
again the second time to recover his
people is the day yea even the last time
that the servants of the Lord shall go
forth in his power to nourish and prune
his vineyard > Ø
9. Change of *straight* to *strait*
6:11 and enter ye in at the *strait* gate (O, P) >
straight (1830, 1837, 1840) > *strait* (1981)

7

Language Themes in Jacob 5 “The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel” (Isaiah 5:7)

Arthur Henry King

The language of Zenos’s parable appears to be richer rhetorically than most of what is in the Book of Mormon, though the richness of 2 Nephi 9 approaches it. The parable is reflected in 2 Nephi 15:1–7 and is a version of Isaiah 5.¹ It seems possible that Zenos’s parable is the oldest piece in the Book of Mormon, except for materials in the book of Ether.

Like Lehi’s and Nephi’s dream, our parable is a prophecy of human history; but more concentrated, more restricted. Like the dream, too, it is not a parable of exact allegorical equivalencies, but symbolic equivalencies. The Lord is both human and divine (and this assumes the incarnation). There is identification between Jehovah and Christ.

Are the questions that the Lord asks rhetorical questions or real? I think the answer is that they are real rhetorical questions: they have a pedagogical intent. They are asked of the servant. And the servant, again, should not be taken precisely as having exact correspondence. His principal rhetorical function is to be there to make the narrative possible in terms of conversation. He is like the confidant in a classical Greek or French play.

Analyzing the rhetoric of Jacob 5 means not an analysis

of narrative and discourse, but of all the elements—one might call them the concomitant elements—such as length of sentence, clause, phrase; stress, intonation; word, sense, and image; scheme, trope; metaphor, topos, myth. What we obtain in this way may be regarded as “rhetorical truth,” in distinction from “logical truth.” Our meditation on the scriptures need not be prompted only by the syntactical and the lexical. A way of putting it all together might be to call it the “constructional.”

The material in Jacob 5 is so rich that I am omitting any consideration of the repetition of sound and its variations. We are dealing with an inspired translation, but an inspired translation can make use only of what is available in the target language; and equivalents of sound, stress, and intonation are likely to be yet further removed from the original than the other elements. Even in inspired language we may expect variation in rhetorical competence.

For example, it is sometimes said that the rhetoric of the Authorized (King James) Version of the Bible is finer than that of the originals from which it is translated. Joseph Smith thought the Luther translation superior to the Authorized Version.² The sixteenth-century Swedish translation of the Bible is inferior to the Authorized Version. Granted our belief in continuing revelation, we should not confuse language differences in the details of translation with the nineteenth-century doctrine of evolution, certainly not in the sense that things get better and better. A sinful community debases its language, a virtuous community improves it; and English in our time is debased.

My language now is less good than it might have been in the nineteenth century, the eighteenth century, the seventeenth century, or the sixteenth century. The Authorized Version itself reaches back to the greater simplicity and

straightforwardness of the written English of the Middle Ages. But it does not follow that as we go back in time the language necessarily becomes simpler or more straightforward. There are periods that are richer in rhetoric, and periods that are plainer. Just as the delineation of patterns on pottery becomes generation by generation less precise, so language may become more slipshod. Language is highly vulnerable to the sin of sloth.

With those preliminary remarks to establish a universe of discourse between us, I pass to the “construction” of Jacob 5. *Construction* is not the best word, since it means “building together.” Speech, whether written or spoken, is an outflow from long immersion in the linguistic tradition of the culture. We might rather speak of the mold or the form. The mold contains an influx or outflux—according to the end you look at.

There are twenty-one paragraphs in this parable. They are marked in the first edition (1830), but more recent editions are divided into verses. Verses are essential for teaching and reference, but we need to have a Book of Mormon in which the paragraphs are also marked, as they are in some editions of the Bible. The rhetorical flow is better seen and heard when the paragraphs are there.

Our first reaction to the scriptures is not to understand them, but to feel them, to experience them. That is why even very young children need to be exposed to the reading of the scriptures aloud in the family circle. The message of the scriptures is not for the “mind,” but for the soul. Concentrating too much on “plain sense,” we may lose the experiential phase, and thereby never gain a total experience of the scriptures. The meaning of the scriptures is not the plain sense, but the total effect. That is the major reason why we don’t want the Book of Mormon reduced to the

level of the New English Bible, as contrasted with the Authorized Version. The tradition of several hundred years, which we share, has almost gone. Great effort is needed to preserve it.

For the convenience of those who do not have a copy of the facsimile of the 1830 edition, here are the paragraphs:

Paragraph 1: verses 1–9

Paragraph 2: verses 10–13

Paragraph 3: verses 14–15

Paragraph 4: verses 16–18

Paragraph 5: verses 19–20

Paragraph 6: verses 21–22

Paragraph 7: verse 23

Paragraph 8: verses 24–25

Paragraph 9: verses 26–28

Paragraph 10: verse 29

Paragraph 11: verse 30

Paragraph 12: verses 31–34

Paragraph 13: verses 35–37

Paragraph 14: verses 38–40

Paragraph 15: verses 41–47 (note the length of this)

Paragraph 16: verse 48

Paragraph 17: verses 49–54 (another long one)

Paragraph 18: verses 55–69 (the parable's main speech)

Paragraph 19: verses 70–71

Paragraph 20: verses 72–74

Paragraph 21: verses 75–77

Each of the three main speeches is one paragraph; all the other paragraphs are comparatively short. They sometimes coincide with a single verse in the modern editions. It is clear that those who divided the Book of Mormon into verses had difficulty in keeping the verses of comparative length. Claims of rhetoric and plain sense may be opposed:

verses in this parable are from three to eighteen lines long. On the whole, the longer the paragraph, the more intense the message and the more emotion.

Each of the paragraphs except the first is introduced by the phrase, "And it came to pass." The first paragraph begins with "Behold." It is obvious why it should not begin with "And it came to pass," because the pause is longer here and this is the beginning of the parable proper. In the current version of the Book of Mormon, chapter 5 begins with "Behold, my brethren," which may be regarded as a prelude to the actual parable, which begins at verse 2. But in the 1830 edition, the parable begins well into chapter 3 of the book of Jacob.³

Readers tend to become irritated by the repetition of "and it came to pass"; but they should realize that the scriptures are intended, in the first place, not to be read in silence but to be heard. What is intended to be heard contains repetitions that the reader may feel he does not need. If the reader will read aloud to himself or to others, instead of merely reading silently, he will begin to feel the ritualistic as well as prompting effects of these repetitions, particularly this repetition of "and it came to pass." Above all, more than promptings and ritual, it is the constant reminder of the passage of time. In the Book of Mormon we feel the passage of time far more strongly than in the Bible; one of the reasons is that large portions of it have been consistently edited by one editor: whereas the Bible is a compilation and not a total as a work of art in the same way as the Book of Mormon.

The twenty-one paragraphs fall into two major groups of approximately the same length. The division is at the point where the Lord's crucial speech begins; verse 40 ends the first part and verse 41 begins the second. Up to verse 40 there are 325 lines and 40 verses, with an average of eight

lines per verse. From verse 41 to the end there are 336 lines, 37 verses, and the average is nine lines per verse. So the two halves are well balanced.

The first half (lines 1–3 are a prologue) is narrative dialogue, which forms a whole and is not readily divisible into parts. And so the first forty verses form a unit of narrative dialogue. The Lord tells us what he’s going to do and what he’s doing. This is a lively, a graphic, way of narrating. It is supported here and there by the historic present. In our modern edition, this has sometimes been taken out and replaced by the past tense: for example, *sayeth* has been replaced by *said*.

In this paper, the spelling and punctuation of the parable is that used in the facsimile of the 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon. The punctuation is rhetorical, in that punctuation indicates how to read the work aloud; verb forms frequently differ from those of the modern edition; deletions change the rhythm of the phrases in ways most noticeable when read aloud.

- The second half of the parable does divide into sections:
- a. the Lord’s quandary: “What could I have done more?” (41–47);
 - b. the Lord’s decision to continue: “Spare it a little longer” (48–54);
 - c. the Lord’s main speech of action and prophecy (55–69);
 - d. bringing in other servants (70–74);
 - e. the Lord’s final speech (75–77).

I need to say somewhat more about the second part (from verse 41 onward).

In verses 41–46, the Lord summarizes the situation and expresses his quandary. In 47 he repeats from 41: “What could I have done more in my vineyard?” and then pro-

ceeds to expand that in the crucial question and self-answer: "Have I slackened mine hand, that I have not nourished it? Nay; I have nourished it, and I have digged it, and I have pruned it, and I have dunged it; and I have stretched forth mine hand almost all the day long; and the end draweth nigh." The rhetorical patterns are intensified in these verses, some of which will be examined in detail later.

The next passage is the Lord's decision to spare his vineyard a little longer (48–54). The servant inaugurates this decision after introducing a new idea—"Is it not the loftiness of thy vineyard? Hath not the branches thereof overcame the roots, which are good?" (48). The word loftiness occurs only once more in the Book of Mormon; this rarity emphasizes the word.

The Lord's first reaction to the servant's new idea is not immediate agreement. He reiterates his intent to hew down the trees and cast them into the fire (49). It looks as if he is pushing the servant to make the decision, or at least to suggest it, and the servant duly does so, saying, "Spare it a little longer" (50); and the Lord accedes with, "Yea, I will spare it a little longer" (51). This is a brief parallel to a longer dialogue between the Lord and Abraham in Genesis 18:23–32, where Abraham pleads with the Lord to spare Sodom and Gomorrah.

Then follows the section of the Lord's prophecy and action (55–69). Immediately after agreeing to the servant's suggestion that the trees should further be spared, the Lord imposes action—the immediacy is such that we would presume that the Lord had been prepared to continue. That would mean that the Lord's decision to hew down the trees at this point functioned more to find out how the servant would react than as a decision. In the main speech of action and prophecy (beginning at 55), repetition is again intensi-

fied, especially between 62 and 69. The speech is one of firm decision, in contrast with the almost plaintive speech of the Lord at 41–47: “What could I have done more?”

Already at 61, the Lord tells the servant to go and call servants, but he does not have that implemented until 70, when the preliminary action by the Lord and the servant is completed and the servant is sent to call in servants to widen the action. The newly recruited servants go forth as missionaries under the pressure of time (71). The sense of urgency that is present throughout the parable till now does not ease off until 74, when the Lord is satisfied with the fruit that is coming in. The last section (75–77) ends the parable with a sense of breadth and ease corresponding with the Millennium (75–76), the last hundred years with Satan (77), and the destruction of the vineyard, which no longer has a function. This last period is prophetic. The past and the present are there together in 75, and 76 is the future.

So with this general outline of the parable into its rhetorically determined sections, I turn now to the detail of repetition and variation. I am not concerned with the almost mechanical collection of the classically rhetorical repetitions of words, and so forth, because that is easily done by patience. All I am concerned with for the rest of this presentation is the kind of repetition and variation that is relevant to the parable as a whole.

I have picked out two aspects of repetition that concern the whole piece. One is repetition with variation, and the other the distribution of a repeated word or phrase throughout the piece. Here is a simple example of repetition with variation:

What could I have done more *for* my vineyard? (41).
 But what could I have done more *in* my vineyard? (47).
 What could I have done more *for* my vineyard? (49).

These lines present the statement, a slightly varied statement, and back to the original statement; a basic pattern.

Here are some longer examples:

- a. I will *prune* it, and *dig* about it, and *nourish* it (4).
- b. He *pruned* it, and *digged* about it, and *nourished* it (5).
- c. It should be *digged* about, and *pruned*, and *nourished* (11).
- d. Let us *prune* it, and *dig* about it, and *nourish* it a little longer (27).

Examples *a* and *d* are both present tense, but *d* has *let us* instead of *a's I will*. Examples *b* and *c* are both past tense, but *c* is passive rather than active. Also, while *b* and *d* have the same order as *a*, in *c* the order has changed.

At verse 47 we have a further development that I call accretion, when something is added:

"I have *nourished* it, and I have *digged* it, and I have *pruned* it, and I have *dunged* it." The word *dunged* comes in for the first time—and there is the further variation of the perfect tense. There is also anaphora of "I have," "I have," "I have," and the polysyndeton—the repetition of *and* in front of each verb. The sentence has been lengthened; and that length is a further way of adding to the feeling. All these reflect the increased emotive element, for this is the highly pathetic speech in the middle of the parable.

The final repetition is at verse 76, the end of the parable: "For the last time have I [*have I* instead of *I have*] *nourished* my vineyard, and *pruned* it, and *dug* about it [not *dig* or *digged* but *dug*] and *dunged* it." The change to *dug* produced sonance (similarity of sound) with *dunged* and the order of the verbs is again different. *Nourished* comes at the beginning: it is the most comprehensive of the verbs; and in this final use, it is brought to the beginning for emphasis. *Pruned*

and *dug* and *dunged* are matter of fact, but *nourished* has more feeling; there are more emotive associations with it.

Note that the rhetorical order may ignore the chronological order. For that matter, the chronological order itself may vary. From the chronological point of view I should expect *pruned*, *dunged*, *digged*, and *nourished*; but there might well be times when the dunging and the digging would come before pruning. Yet it is almost essential that the dunging should come before the digging, and for purposes of emphasis that has been ignored and dunging has come to the end.

The most powerful examples of variation with change of order and accretion are in verses 63 and 66 in the middle of the great speech of prophecy and action, the strong speech. The first, verse 63, is concerned with the antithesis of *last* and *first*, and the second is about the antithesis of *bad* and *good*. These two complementary antitheses are put together in the middle of this speech: "Graft in the branches: begin at the *last*, that they may be *first*, and that the *first* may be *last*, and dig about the trees, both *old* and *young*, the *first* and *last*, and the *last* and the *first*, that all may be nourished once again for the *last* time" (63).

The main point of this verse is the antithesis, and it gives us the clue to this parable. In the first part of the parable, the effort is made to save practically everybody; this is repeated again and again. In the middle of the parable the word *bad* comes in for the first time, and this verse is where it comes in: *bad* occurs (all but one example) in the second half of the parable. Seventy-five percent of the uses of *bad* in the Book of Mormon are in the second part of this chapter. Now that *bad* has come in, the *bad* has to be got out, and that is the solution to the situation. The introduction of the word *bad* in the second part together with the *first* and the

last, and its implication for the sense of the whole parable, is an example of rhetorical truth. It has not been made semantically explicit, but it has been made rhetorically clear.

In the next verse with antithesis, verse 66, *the bad* and *the good* come in here to complement *the first* and *the last*. The reason is that the *first* and the *last* and the *bad* and the *good* are not the same categories; they are put in chiasmic relation to one another:

It grieveth me that I should lose the trees of my vineyard; wherefore, ye shall clear away the *bad*, according as the *good* shall grow, that the root and the top may be equal in strength, until the *good* shall overcome the *bad*, and the *bad* be hewn down and cast into the fire, that they cumber not the ground of my vineyard; and thus will I sweep away the *bad* out of my vineyard.

Note that the top's being equal in strength goes back to the servant's remark, "Is it not the loftiness of the vineyard? Hath not the branches thereof overcame the roots, which are good?" (48). Note also the strength of the word *sweep* here; this is the only use of the word in the parable. We see very clearly what the decision is.

Here are further examples of accretion and variation:

These which I have *plucked off*, I will *cast into the fire*, and burn them (9).

It will soon become ripened, that it may be *cast into the fire* (37).

All the trees of my vineyard are good for nothing, save it be to be *hewn down* and *cast into the fire*. (42; *hewn down* has been added for the first time.)

Because . . . I *plucked* not the *branches* thereof, and *cast them into the fire* (45).

It grieveth me that I should *hew down all the trees of my vineyard*, and *cast them into the fire* (47).

It grieveth me that I should lose *the trees of my vineyard*; wherefore, ye shall clear away the *bad*, according as the good shall grow, that the root and the top may be equal in strength, until the good shall overcome the *bad*, and the *bad* be *hewn down and cast into the fire*, that they cumber not the ground of *my vineyard* (66).

The *bad* shall be *cast away* (69).

The wild branches began to be *plucked off*, and to be *cast away* (73).

Even until the *bad* had been *cast away* out of the *vineyard* (74).

The *bad* is *cast away* (75).

And the *bad* will I *cast away* into its own place (77).

That means that in the last part of the parable the stress is upon success and not upon punishment.

We come now to *distribution*. This is dealt with as general distribution or local distribution (either occurring throughout the piece or in a specific place or places of it), first half and second half, initial, initial and final, final.

Distribution in General

I have divided this up into words and phrases that run right through the parable, and others where there are gaps in the uniformity of use, for we need to consider why the gaps occur.

Every paragraph in the actual parable begins with, "And it came to pass." As we have said already, the task of the phrase is to nudge the attention, which is why it naturally occurs at the beginning of paragraphs, but it occurs elsewhere when particular attention has to be drawn to the narrative's taking a further step.

The second main nudger of attention is *behold*, which we shall deal with when we discuss gaps in uniformity since *behold* is not used consistently throughout.

Apart from these two nudgers, the most frequent phrases are of course associated with the main image. There are many of these, and we shall consider only the outstanding ones.

The *wild branch* in the singular occurs only in the first forty-five verses of the parable, that is, a little over the first half. I think the reason is that more attention is given in the first, the narrative part, to an individual tree and an individual branch:

How comest thou hither to plant this tree, or this *branch* of the tree? (21).

I have planted another *branch* of the tree also (23).

Look hither, and behold another *branch* also, which I have planted (24).

And the wild fruit of the last, had overcome that part of the tree which brought forth good fruit, even that the *branch* had withered away and died (40).

Behold, this last, whose *branch* hath withered away (43).

Because that I plucked not the branches thereof, and cast them into the fire, behold, they have overcome the good *branch*, that it hath withered away (45).

Of the word in the plural, *branches*, there are twenty-six examples in the first part and twenty-four in the second. The singular *branch* occurs in the first half; it is clear that more attention is being paid to this image in the first half of the parable than in the second.

The words *natural* and *wild* are used in opposition. *Natural branches* occurs seven times in the first part and six in the second. *Wild branches* occurs five times in the first and twice in the second. But *wild* is also used otherwise: *wild olive tree* (9, 10, 34; *wild olive tree* occurs again in the second part at 46), *wild tree* (18), *wild olive branches* (17), and *wild fruit* in

contrast with *tame fruit* (25) and *good fruit* (40; in the second part also at 45).

Natural is also used several times of *tree* (55, 56, 67, 68).

Root and *roots* are used regularly throughout, and that follows from the fact that the main theme of this image-sequence is that the roots and the branches should be "equal." Since more attention is normally paid to the branch group than to the root group in reading this parable, I think it is worth while to cite the *root/roots* contexts, because these contexts do more than anything else to make the whole pattern of reference to the image of the olive tree clear. First are efforts to save the branches:

I take away many of these young and tender branches, and I will graft them whithersoever I will; and it mattereth not that if it so be, that the root of this tree will perish (8).

Then, in verse 11, there is a change of plan:

It grieveth me that I should lose this tree; wherefore, that perhaps I might preserve the roots thereof that they perish not, that I might preserve them unto myself, I have done this thing (11).

The importance of the roots becomes paramount:

The branches of the wild tree hath taken hold of the moisture of the root thereof, that the root thereof hath brought forth much strength; and because of the much strength of the root thereof, the wild branches hath brought forth tame fruit (18).

Later, the branches, not the roots, have saved the situation:

Because thou didst graft in the branches of the wild olive tree, they have nourished the roots, that they are alive, and they have not perished (34).

But the roots are not forgotten:

I know that the roots are good; and for mine own purpose I have preserved them; and because of their much strength, they have hitherto brought forth from the wild branches, good fruit (36).

In contrast to verse 34, the branches overcome the roots:

But behold, the wild branches have grown, and have overran the roots thereof; and because that the wild branches have overcome the roots thereof, it hath brought forth much evil fruit (37).

Then comes the key reference to equalization:

And it came to pass that the servant, sayeth unto his master, Is it not the loftiness of thy vineyard? Hath not the branches thereof overcame the roots, which are good? And because that the branches have overcame the roots thereof? For behold, they grew faster than the strength of the roots thereof, taking strength unto themselves (48).

The importance of the roots is again to the fore:

And this will I do, that the tree may not perish, that perhaps I may preserve unto myself the roots thereof, for mine own purpose. And behold, the roots of the natural branches of the tree which I planted whithersoever I would, are yet alive (53–54).

Again, the roots have the initiative:

We will nourish again the trees of the vineyard, and we will trim up the branches thereof; and we will pluck from the trees those branches which are ripened, that must perish, and cast them into the fire.—And this I do, that perhaps the roots thereof may take strength, because of their goodness; and because of the change of the branches, that the good may overcome the evil (58–59).

The effects of the branches and the roots are balanced finally:

And because that I have preserved the natural branches, and the roots thereof; and that I have grafted in the natural branches again, into their mother tree; and have preserved the roots of their mother tree, that perhaps the trees of my vineyard may bring forth again good fruit (60).

But the roots must not reject the graft:

Ye shall not clear away the bad thereof, all at once, lest the roots thereof should be too strong for the graft, and the graft thereof shall perish, and I lose the trees of my vineyard (65).

In consequence of the measured clearing out of the bad, the good flourishes:

Ye shall clear away the bad, according as the good shall grow, that the root and the top may be equal in strength, until the good shall overcome the bad (66).

Then comes that word *equal*, the solution of the problem being the equality of root and branch:

They did keep the root and the top thereof, equal, according to the strength thereof (73, here comes that word *equal*, the solution of the problem being the equality of root and branch).

There, clearly, is the solution.

There are twenty-three examples of *graft* in Jacob 5; with four only elsewhere in the Book of Mormon. In the second part of the parable, *graft* is used about twice as many times as in the first part. This is less usual of the other words used in this image—most have been more frequent in the first part. There is a gap between verse 34 and verse 52, where the word does not occur, but that is accounted for because

it is not used in the pathetic speech of the Lord from 41–47. The word obviously belongs to the action of the first part rather than the action of the second. However, the difficulty still exists that a *tree* represents the house of Israel and not *trees*. And there is some contradiction between the broader action of the second part and the fact that it still applies to only one tree: “The branches of the natural tree, will I graft into the natural branches of the tree” (68). There is some difficulty in reconciling the image of one tree and the image of a whole vineyard, but it is significant that of the singular *tree* there are thirty-one examples in part one and twelve examples in part two; whereas of the plural *trees*, there are no examples in part one and sixteen examples in part two. That shows the broader picture of the second part, although it does not entirely solve the problem of the one tree and a vineyard full of trees.

It is not surprising to find *graft* and *tree* together, since grafts are normally made in trees and not in branches.

With the word *nourish*, we are back at the normal preponderance of number in part one for this image. There are eleven examples of this group in part one and six in part two. On the other hand, the effective use of *nourish* is greater in part two than part one and comes to its climax in the last use of all: “For the last time have I nourished my vineyard” (76). *Nourished* is also part of the pattern of variation and accretion.

The *preserve* group has ten examples in each of parts one and two; on the other hand, the *perish* group has seven examples in the first part and only three in the second. That is surprising.

Good is used throughout, but has only six examples in part one and thirteen in part two. This definitely points to the work in the vineyard’s becoming more hopeful as time

goes on.⁴ Of the nineteen examples of *good*, ten are associated with fruit.

Finally, under distribution in general, we have the highly emotive word *grieveth*. Of the expression, "It grieveth me," there are eight examples. It begins early: "It grieveth me that I should lose this tree" (7); the phrase is repeated at 11 and 13. The situation becomes worse, as signified by the addition of *now*: "Now, it grieveth me that I should lose this tree" (32). The expression is used twice at the end of the Lord's pathetic speech: "It grieveth me that I should lose them" (46); and the climax: "It grieveth me that I should hew down all the trees of my vineyard, and cast them into the fire, that they should be burned" (47). In response to the servant's "spare it a little longer" (50), the Lord says, "Yea, I will spare it a little longer, for it grieveth me that I should lose the trees of my vineyard" (51), which is a repetition of verse 46. The same phrase is used again at 66: "For it grieveth me that I should lose the trees of my vineyard." It is not used again after that point.

We turn to the examples where an expression runs right through the parable, but there are gaps in the uniformity of use.

There are fifty examples of the *behold* group. It has ceased, of course, to have its literal sense and has come to mean "pay attention!" Sometimes it does mean "look" in the literal sense, but even then the "pay attention" element is there. The general sense, which has lost the specific, is already exemplified at verse 3: "For behold, thus saith the Lord." Here, *behold* almost means "listen!"

That said, *but behold* can look after itself except, it being so frequent, we ask why it is not evenly distributed throughout. The first gap is from verses 8 to 14. This tight piece of narrative is introduced by *behold* at the beginning

of verse 8, but there is no reason to disrupt this packed collection of acts and instructions. The gap between 46 and 48 looks long only because the verses are long. This is not really a gap. At verses 54–61, the Lord is well into his strong speech of prophecy and act, and does not need to nudge his audience. From 63 to 74, again, the pace of action has increased to height and breadth, and interest is too great for the need of a *behold*.

The expression “Lord of the vineyard” does not appear until verse 8. It is led up to interestingly by first of all verse 3: “A tame olive tree, which a man took and nourished in his vineyard”; in the very next verse he has become the “master of the vineyard” (4). That is repeated in verse 7, and finally the step is taken to, “And behold, saith the Lord of the vineyard” (8). This is because we have here the narrative dialogue, and the two members of the dialogue have to be definitely identified: the Lord of the vineyard and the servant. But the two steps to the full *Lord* show the stratified symbolism of the whole parable. Between 41 and 49, this identification is not needed, because the Lord is giving his pathetic speech.

Then follows a passage of dialogue between the Lord and the servant (this accounts for the examples in 49 and 50). There is a pause in the Lord’s speech at 55–57 and that accounts for the use in verse 57. From then on until verse 69 the Lord continues in one swath. After this great speech comes a section of narrative that continues until verse 75; this accounts for the use of the title in 70, 71, 72 (twice), and 74 (twice); thereafter to the end it is not needed, because that is the final speech of the Lord. The point therefore is that the expression is used when identification is needed in narrative and dialogue; and when the Lord is speaking at length, it is not needed, because he is speaking.

There is a similar explanation of the use of the word *servant*. There are twenty-four uses of the word *servant*, of which eighteen are by the Lord to the servant and six by the servant to the Lord. All of them occur by verse 57; and of these, nineteen are in part 1, the major narrative dialogue part. There is a final isolated couple of examples in verse 70, when the Lord sends his servant to fetch other servants. This is prepared for in verse 61: "Go to, and call servants," although not implemented until verse 70. Then there are three other references to *servants* in 71, 72, and 75, which is the missionary period.

There are twelve examples of the word *labor*, in four groups: 15–16, 29 and 32, 61–62, and 71–75. Our example of *labor* is almost an example of local use, except that there are four "local" uses here; and it brings to mind that when there is repetition it is frequently, in the Book of Mormon, of this kind. That is to say, a particular expression is used for two or three verses, and then disused. The use of *labor* in this way is characteristic.

Group I:

And it came to pass that a long time passed away, and the Lord of the vineyard sayeth unto his servant, Come, let us go down into the vineyard, that we may labor in the vineyard.

And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard, and also the servant, went down into the vineyard to labor (15–16).

Group II:

The Lord of the vineyard sayeth unto his servant, Come, let us go down into the vineyard, that we may labor again in the vineyard (29).

It profiteth me nothing, notwithstanding all our labor (32).

Group III:

Wherefore, go to, and call servants, that we may labor diligently with our mights in the vineyard. . . .Wherefore, let us go to, and labor with our mights, this last time (61–62).

Group IV:

And the Lord of the vineyard saith unto them, Go to, and labor in the vineyard, with your mights . . . and if ye labor with your mights with me, ye shall have joy in the fruit which I shall lay up. . . . And it came to pass that the servants did go to it, and labor with their mights; and the Lord of the vineyard labored also with them (71–72).

And thus they labored, with all diligence. . . . ye have been diligent in laboring with me in my vineyard (74–75).

Local Distribution

It follows that after these examples we should turn to what I have called local use. When we come to this point in our investigation into repetition, variation, increment, general, and local, we realize that there are musical analogs to this kind of use. For example, in a symphonic movement there are two major themes, there is the working up and repetition of those themes and their interrelation, and at the same time there are episodes, which have local significance. I refer back to what I said earlier about “construction” and “flowing.” With the rhetorician, as with the composer, what may occur to him may require work, or it may just flow. There are points at which one gets knotted up and there are others in which one feels free. When we are dealing with inspired writing, we may expect the flow to be normal. There will be points at which there is pause and reflection. Inspiration may sometimes be dictation, but at other times it consists of impulse.

The outstanding example of a local phrase is “What could I have done more for my vineyard?” which occurs at 41 and 49. But in between these examples, at 47, in the form of “What could I have done more *in* my vineyard?” is another example of variation of a simple kind. The first example is at the beginning of the Lord’s pathetic speech (41); the second example, with variation, is at the end of that speech. It seems to me that *in* instead of *for* brings us closer to the work, to remind us that the Lord actually worked in the vineyard himself, he did not simply arrange for things to happen in it.

I am inclined to think that the beginning and end of his moving speech are rhetorical questions. But I think that the question at 49 is directed to the servant and is asking for an answer. The servant does not directly answer the question but simply says, “Spare it a little longer” (50); and that gives the Lord the opportunity of saying yes, he will do that (51).

The word *corrupt* occurs eight times; six between 39 and 48 and the other two at the end of 75. It supplements and complements *bad*, which occurs first of all at 32 and then from 65 to 69, and finally from 74 to 77. At 75 it comes together with *corrupt* in the same verse. *Corrupt* clearly is a local use.

The two occurrences of the word *corrupt* in 39 prepare for the Lord’s pathetic speech: “It came to pass that they beheld that the fruit of the natural branches had become corrupt also . . . and they had all become corrupt.” The next four examples are all in the Lord’s pathetic speech:

I knew that all the fruit of the vineyard, save it were these, had become corrupted. And now, these which have once brought forth good fruit, have also become corrupted (42).

Notwithstanding all the care which we have taken of my vineyard, the trees thereof hath become corrupted, that they bring forth no good fruit (46).

Who is it that hath corrupted my vineyard? (47).

The question receives no reply, but the servant in the next verse picks up the word *corrupt* and says:

Behold, I say, Is not this the cause that the trees of thy vineyard hath become corrupted? (48).

He provides a natural explanation, but I doubt whether the Lord's question, "Who is it that hath corrupted my vineyard?" is satisfied with that explanation. Satan appears to play no part in this parable. The word is first used in Job; the only prophet to use the word is Zechariah.

Corrupt is a description and a judgment; *bad* is only a judgment. Therefore the word *corrupt* is stronger than the word *bad*. The two come together in verse 75: "The Lord of the vineyard saw that his fruit was good, and that his vineyard was no more *corrupt* . . . ; my vineyard is no more *corrupted*, and the *bad* is cast away."

Here are some simpler examples of local use.

Overcome: there are seven examples stretching from 37 to 50 with one towards the end at 66:

The wild branches have *overcome* the roots thereof (37).

The wild fruit of the last, had *overcome* that part of the tree which brought forth good fruit (40).

They [the bad branches] have *overcome* the good branch, that it hath withered away. (45)

Hath not the branches thereof *overcome* the roots, which are good? And because that the branches have *overcame* the roots thereof? (48; this is the servant again picking up the word that his master has used).

The last two examples are six verses apart, but they do interconnect:

That the good may *overcome* the evil . . . until the good shall *overcome* the bad (59, 66).

Spot: there are two separate, brief uses of this word; 21–25 and 43–44:

Group I:

It was the poorest *spot* in all the land of thy vineyard. And the Lord of the vineyard sayeth unto him, Counsel me not: I knew that it was a poor *spot* of ground. . . . the Lord of the vineyard sayeth unto his servant . . . thou knowest that this *spot* of ground was poorer than the first. . . . Look hither, and behold the last: behold, this have I planted in a good *spot* of ground.

This is almost an altercation.

Group II:

I did plant in a good *spot* of ground. . . . I also cut down that which cumbered this *spot* of ground.

The word is not needed elsewhere in the parable.

Bitter: this word occurs three times between verses 52 and 65:

Let us pluck from the tree, those branches whose fruit is most *bitter* (52).

Pluck not the wild branches from the trees, save it be those which are most *bitter* (57).

Ye shall clear away the branches which bring forth *bitter* fruit (65).

Words in the First Half of the Parable

The most obvious phrase is *the Lord of the vineyard*; the main use is “*the Lord of the vineyard sayeth unto his servant*” (15–18); “*the Lord of the vineyard sayeth unto him*” (22); “*the*

Lord of the vineyard sayeth unto his servant" (23); "*the Lord of the vineyard sayeth again unto his servant*" (24); "*the Lord of the vineyard sayeth unto the servant*" (26); "*the Lord of the vineyard sayeth unto his servant*" (29); "*the Lord of the vineyard sayeth unto the servant*" (33); "*the Lord of the vineyard sayeth unto his servant*" (35); "*the Lord of the vineyard wept, and sayeth unto the servant*" (41; this is the beginning of the pathetic speech). There are only two separate examples in part two: verses 45 and 57. The repetition of this phrase reflects the confidant function of the servant.

Go/went down occurs only in the first half: "Come, let us *go down* into the vineyard" (15); "The Lord of the vineyard, and also the servant, *went down* into the vineyard to labor" (16); "The Lord of the vineyard, and the servant, *went down* into the vineyard" (30); "They *went down* into the nethermost parts of the vineyard" (39).

In the second half, the Lord is not so concerned with visiting the vineyard. It is to be remembered that the time span in the first half of this parable is much longer than that of the second half.

The *tame olive tree* is mentioned only in the first half. There are eight examples: "I will liken thee, O House of Israel, like unto a *tame olive tree*" (3; that is the beginning of the scheme of symbolism); "His *olive tree* began to decay"(4)—already. "It grieveth me that I should lose this *tree*" (7). In verse 9 the wild olive tree is introduced—it is confined to one tree at this stage; "grafted in the branches of the *wild olive tree*" (10); "the natural branches of the *tame olive tree*" (14); "the branches of the *wild olive tree* . . . have nourished the roots, that they are alive" (34); "They have become like unto the wild olive tree; and they are of no worth" (46). This change is characteristic of the specificity of part one as opposed to the broader picture of part two.

Words in the Second Half of the Parable

The word *bad* occurs in verse 32, but the rest of its eleven examples are in the second part. We have already dealt with its interrelation with *corrupt*. The example in 32 is with *fruit* as opposed to *good fruit*:

Ye shall not clear away the *bad* thereof, all at once, lest the roots thereof should be too strong for the graft (65).

Ye shall clear away the *bad*, according as the good shall grow, that the root and the top may be equal in strength, until the good shall overcome the *bad*, and the *bad* be hewn down . . . thus will I sweep away the *bad* out of my vineyard (66).

And the *bad* shall be cast away; yea, even out of all the land of my vineyard (69).

And thus they labored . . . even until the *bad* had been cast away out of the vineyard (74).

The *bad* is cast away (75).

Then will I cause the good and the *bad* to be gathered . . . and the *bad* will I cast away into its own place (77).

All through the second part, *bad* occurs with the definite article—it has become an entity in its own right.

Initial Group of Words and Phrases

We come now to a group that is well defined, small, but characteristic. That is the *initial* group of words and phrases. Strictly speaking, the parable begins at verse 2, verse 1 being introductory. The word *prophet* occurs here as “a Prophet of the Lord” (a fixed form), and it is used in the introductory verse as *the Prophet Zenos*. That name occurs in the introductory verse of chapter 6 in a reference back to the parable in chapter 5. The prophet does not refer to himself within the parable.

The pleonastic pair “Hearken . . . and hear” (2) occurs

once more in the Book of Mormon in 1 Nephi 20:1: "Hearken and hear this, O House of Jacob." The phrase sets the beginning of the parable in high register (formal language).

References to the house of Israel occur early on: "O ye House of Israel" (2); "O house of Israel" (3); and "the house of Israel" (1). It is not surprising that this phrase does not recur in the parable, for it is replaced by the tree: "I will liken thee, O house of Israel, like unto a tame olive tree" (3).

A *man* (3) occurs frequently in scripture, but not again in the parable. The phrase is replaced by *Master of the Vineyard* (4–7). At verse 8, *Lord of the vineyard* replaces *master of the vineyard* and is used thenceforward. The *man* is not discarded, but is embodied in *Master of the Vineyard*, and he is embodied in *Lord of the Vineyard*. This is significant for the symbolic interrelation.

Decay: "A tame olive tree . . . it grew, and waxed old, and began to *decay*" (3); "He saw that his olive tree began to *decay*" (4). This announces the beginning of the action in the parable, the process of decay. I find no other example in the parable and no replacement until we find the word *corrupt* at verse 39.

Main: "The *main* top thereof began to perish" (6) and "We will pluck off those *main* branches which are beginning to wither away" (7). I found no other example of *main* in the parable and no apparent replacement. *Top* is not a concept that is repeated until verse 66: "The root and the *top* may be equal" (the key to the solution), and that phrase is again repeated at 73: "The root and the *top*." *Main* does not occur in this phrase nor in any phrase referring to branches; nor does it occur in the Bible. *Main top* may have been known to Joseph Smith as a nautical term—of the topsail sometimes set above the mainsail.

Tame: "A *tame* olive tree" (3); "The natural branches of a *tame* olive tree" (14); "*Tame* fruit" (18). *Tame* is replaced by *natural*, which occurs with it at 14 above. *Tame* is contrasted with *wild*, which is used first at 17: "*Wild* olive branches"; and continues to be used, although *tame* is discarded.

Words in the Final Section

I found one *final* word—one that occurs only in the last part of the parable—of interest and importance, and that is *equal*. It is first used at 66: "Ye shall clear away the bad, according as the good shall grow, that the root and the top may be *equal* in strength." Then at 73: "And there began to be the natural fruit again in the vineyard; and the natural branches began to grow and thrive exceedingly; and the wild branches began to be plucked off, and to be cast away; and they did keep the root and the top thereof, *equal*, according to the strength thereof."

This is the solution of the olive-yard problem. It is not the task of this paper to go into the symbolism, but it may be worth pointing out that the roots, the trunk, and the branches of a tree are contemporaneous—one does not come before another. From the beginning, a plant shoots down and up from the seed.

Initial and Final

Few words of interest are present at the beginning and at the end and not in between. On *top* (6, 66, 73), see the previous discussion.

The principal word of interest is *time* in various combinations. In verse 29 we have "the *time* draweth near, and the end soon cometh." It is difficult to realize that most of the time covered by the parable has already elapsed by this point. At verse 71 we have "fruit which I shall lay up unto

myself, against the *time* which will soon come." And in the very last verse of the parable we still have "and when the *time* cometh that evil fruit shall again come into my vineyard." One *time* has come in verse 75, but there is still another *time* and another *time* after that.

There are two phrases with *time* that complement one another: *the last time*, and *a long time*. The phrase *a long time* is used mainly up to verse 31 to remind us of the age covered by the first part of the parable: "A *long time* had passed away" (15); "This *long time* have I nourished it" (20); "I have nourished it this *long time*" (22; this is repeated in verse 23 and 25). At 29 we are again told in the narrative that *a long time* had passed away. That is succeeded by another combination with *nourished* at 31: "This *long time* have we nourished this tree." There is one example only of this phrase at the end of the parable, this time looking to the future: "For a *long time* will I lay up the fruit of my vineyard" (76); repeated again at the end of the verse. The complementary expression "the *last time*" does not begin (as we may expect) until 62: "Let us go to, and labor with our mights, this *last time*, . . . this is for the *last time* that I shall prune my vineyard"; then "That all may be nourished once again for the *last time*" (63); "Dung them once more, for the *last time*: for the end draweth nigh" (64; that was the expression already used at verse 29); "This is the *last time* that I shall nourish my vineyard: for the end is nigh at hand" (71 again); "For this *last time* have we nourished my vineyard" (75); "For the *last time* have I nourished my vineyard" (76, repeated again). The insistence on the length of time in the first half of the parable is complemented by the insistence on the little time left in the second half.

The expression *lay up* is used seven times up to verse 31. It is used once at 46 and three times between 71 and 76:

I may *lay up* fruit thereof, against the season, unto myself (13).

I shall *lay up* much fruit, which the tree thereof hath brought forth; and the fruit thereof I shall *lay up*, against the season, unto mine own self (18).

That I may *lay up* of the fruit thereof, against the season, unto mine own self (19).

Take of the fruit thereof, and lay it up, against the season, that I may preserve it unto mine own self (20).

I must *lay up* fruit, against the season, unto mine own self (29).

And I have *laid up* unto myself against the season, much fruit (31).

The isolated example is in the pathetic speech:

These I had hope to preserve, to have *laid up* fruit thereof, against the season, unto mine own self (46).

Last, at the end of the parable:

Ye shall have joy in the fruit which I shall *lay up* unto myself, against the time which will soon come (71).

Wherefore I will *lay up* unto mine own self of the fruit, for a long time (76).

This example of *lay up* is a good one of variation and accretion. There is just enough variation to keep it alive and prevent it from becoming mechanical.

A term of similar meaning is *gather*, which occurs only twice, in verses 23 and 77, towards the beginning and at the end. At 23 it occurs together with *lay up*: "It hath brought forth much fruit; therefore, *gather* it, and *lay it up*, against the season, that I may preserve it unto mine own self"; and "Then will I cause the good and the bad to be *gathered*" (77).

In considering these combinations of repetition, variation, and distribution, I have only begun to exemplify the extraordinary way in which phrases are combined and

accrete in this parable. The rhetorical buildup is complex and rich. There is no passage like this in the Bible. Our parable is a good example of what I mean when I say that the rhetoric of the Book of Mormon is richer than that of the Bible. This parable, with all its repetition of varying kinds, approaches more closely the condition of music than any other piece of prose that I know. An extraordinary dancing energy runs through it.

In contrast with all these repetitions, I will mention the words and phrases that occur only once in this parable and sometimes only once in the whole Book of Mormon.

Loftiness: this occurs only once, and only once more in the Book of Mormon: "Is it not the *loftiness* of thy vineyard? Hath not the branches thereof overcame the roots, which are good?" (48). The other example helps us to understand this one: "The *loftiness* of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low" (2 Nephi 12:17, quoting Isaiah 2:17). Here the association is with pride. It is interesting that the Lord apparently ignores this input of the servant.

Glory: "I may yet have *glory* in the fruit of my vineyard" (54). Similarly unique and with a similar sense in this parable is *rejoice exceedingly*: "And perhaps that I may *rejoice exceedingly*, that I have preserved the roots and the branches of the first fruit" (60). There is not much rejoicing or glory in this parable; there is hard work, real experience, and a satisfactory end.

At verse 66, which is a strong one, we have the most powerful verb in the parable, *sweep*: "And thus will I *sweep* away the bad out of my vineyard." Compare 2 Nephi 24:23 (quoting Isaiah 14:23): "I will *sweep* it with the besom of destruction"; but a context that intimates the strength of the

phrase better is at Ether 14:18: "He *sweepeth* the earth before him."

Two expressions occur several times in Jacob 5 but nowhere else in the Book of Mormon. One phrase is *cumber the ground*, which appears at 9, 49, and 66; and at 30: "All sorts of fruit did *cumber the tree*"; and at 44: "Also cut down that which *cumbered this spot*."

The other phrase is *nethermost parts*, which occurs at 13, 14, 19, 38, 39, and 52, but nowhere else in the Book of Mormon.

One last example, the most important, of this unique use of words, is the word *wept*: "And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard *wept*" (41). The Manhood and the Godhood of the Lord of the vineyard come together here. Enoch saw the Lord *weeping* (Moses 7:28) and "Jesus *wept*" (John 11:35).

It will be realized that this account is selective and far from complete. But it may point the way to a more thorough analysis of this chapter as of other parts of the Book of Mormon. It needs to be combined with observations on syntax, lexis, sound, stress, and much else.

But enough has been said, I think, to illustrate how packed and rich the Book of Mormon is. It is a quality that cannot be properly appreciated unless the book is read aloud and listened to. We no longer in our culture read slowly, accurately, or aloud to the soul; we skim. We do little repeated reading. We do not read for an experience, let alone for understanding, so much as to read for immediate "comprehension." If we read aloud, and even more likely if we hear something read aloud, we take it as an experience. If we do analyze, and we must analyze, it must be to have a better whole from the parts after we have completed the analysis. Analysis has no value in itself. It has value insofar

as it contributes toward the soul's being able to experience and understand the whole better in the end.

We do not know how far the Bible has suffered historically, but we do know that it has had much opportunity to be changed and that it has suffered most in our century with being ignored, and from the more and more vulgar variants of it which are being used. However, I do not say that the New English Bible is vulgar; it is merely dull. But even dullness is a relief from vulgarity. In the Book of Mormon we have been given a text that was translated from plates. That text was preserved on those plates, all through the time that the Bible was subject to alteration. That is why in the Book of Mormon we have a unique gift. We are closer to the times it speaks of than we are in any other scripture. The Book of Mormon is a test of the Bible's accuracy.

We need to learn ourselves and to teach our children the delight of this gift of the Book of Mormon. We can do that by reading it aloud to them, to teach them to read the scriptures aloud to themselves, and to maintain the tradition of reading aloud in the family, so that we shall not lose the power of experiencing and understanding the Book of Mormon and through the Book of Mormon, the Bible. Our children need to be exposed to the language of the scriptures at the time they learn their own language, so that they can incorporate the scriptural dialect into their familiarity. Exposure to the Book of Mormon can lead first to experience and afterwards to understanding through experience.

To sit down and meditate the rhetoric of the Book of Mormon is to learn the rhetorical truth of the Book of Mormon, a truth that is all-embracing. Rhetoric does not encapsulate and communicate messages; like music, it is an art. To experience language is more than to abstract mes-

sages from it. Rhetoric is not an added decoration; it is the thing itself.

Notes

1. See "wild grapes" (Isaiah 5:2); "What could have been done more in my vineyard?" (verse 4); "pruned" and "digged" (verse 6); "for the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel" (verse 7). Compare also Paul's "root" and "branches"; "wild olive tree"; "grafted"; and "wild by nature" (Romans 11:16–24).

2. See *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, compiled by Joseph Fielding Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 364. See also Joseph Smith, Jr., *The History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, B. H. Roberts, ed., 2d rev. ed., 7 vols (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1957), 6:364, and Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith* (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1980), 366, 402.

3. The chapters in the 1830 version are, on the whole, longer. Note that chapter 3 of the 1830 edition begins with, "Now behold, it came to pass" where "behold" and "it came to pass" are put together as a kind of extra indication of attention. In our modern version, the beginning of old chapter 3 corresponds with the beginning of chapter 4.

4. Of the opposition between *good* and *bad*, *bad* is dealt with under "Words of the Second Half of the Parable."

8

Words and Phrases in Jacob 5

John W. Welch

Zenos's vocabulary is extremely simple. He spins a complex yarn out of the most elementary linguistic materials.

The total English computer count for Jacob 5 is 3,733 words. That total would have been significantly lower in Zenos's Hebrew, where *olive-tree* and the phrase *and it came to pass* would undoubtedly have been single words, and several other English parts of speech would not have appeared as separate words in the ancient text.

Most of the words in Jacob 5 are extremely common. Few can be thought of as truly distinctive. Several are used repeatedly by Zenos, and because of that repetition some words have become sharply characteristic of this allegory, even though they appear to be rather ordinary parts of everyday ancient Israelite speech.

By my count, only 252 different words are used in the allegory.¹ Of these, 92 are conjunctions, prepositions, pronouns, articles, or other such normal parts of speech that occur universally in language. Of the remaining 160 root words, all but two are found in the Bible: the exceptions are *main* and *spot* (meaning *place*). Most of the words in Jacob 5 appear throughout the Old and New Testaments and other literatures: for example, from *bad*, *begin*, *bring*, *burn*, *call*, *come*, *to tree*, *watch*, *words*, and *young*.

Many of these words, although appearing throughout

the Bible, are used more frequently in the Old Testament than in the New. The overall vocabulary of Zenos is thus closer to the Hebrew vocabulary of the Old Testament than that of the New. For example, the following words are among those words of Zenos that are far more common in Old Testament usage: *alive, bitter, branch, broken, choice, counsel, decay, dig, hew, speedily, and wither*.

Individual words in Jacob 5 that do not appear in the New Testament but only in the Old Testament are *loftiness* (Isaiah 2:17; Jeremiah 48:29), *overrun* (Nahum 1:8), *nethermost* (1 Kings 6:6; compare also "nether parts of the earth," Ezekiel 31:14, 16, 18; 32:18, 24), *prune* (for example, Leviticus 25:3; Isaiah 5:6), and *size* (for example, Exodus 36:9).

Only two words in Jacob 5 are not found in the Old Testament but are found in the New: *cumber* (Luke 13:7), and *graft* (Romans 11:17).² The concept of grafting, however, is present in Isaiah 17:10. Likewise, the English word *cumber* means to encumber, crowd, obstruct, or render useless. Don Parry suggests that these meanings are present in other Old Testament words meaning hinder, burden, trouble, or destroy.

Zenos's total word count breaks down into a very small vocabulary list, due to the fact that the key words in the allegory are repeated numerous times without the use of synonyms and with little variation in phraseology. Thus, of 160 total words, *the* is used 369 times, six others are used more than one hundred times each, twenty-five more appear thirty or more times each, and another fifty-seven appear ten to twenty-nine times.³ More than half of the words are used more than ten times each. A few significant words appear just once: *blessed, body, broken, care, change, choice, counsel, cut, died, faster, glory, hold, hoped, loftiness, moisture, pleasure, shoot, slackened, stretched, sweep, taste,*

thrive, together, trim, watch, waxed, wept, and wroth. For a complete listing of the words in Jacob 5, arranged according to how often they appear, see Table 1, located later in this chapter.

Zenos's words combine to form a number of distinctive expressions or idioms. Interesting results come from tabulating key phrases in Zenos's allegory and their occurrences elsewhere in scripture.

The following thirty phrases or expressions appear in Jacob 5 and not again in exactly this form in the four Standard Works (near equivalents can be found for less than half of these):

- bad fruit
- bitter fruit (cf. uncircumcised fruit, Leviticus 19:23)
- began to decay
- to call servants
- choice unto me above all others
- clear away
- counsel me not
- end draweth nigh
- end is nigh at hand
- end soon cometh
- lay up fruit against the season unto myself (11x)
- look hither and behold (cf. look down and behold, Lamentations 3:50)
- main branches
- main top
- master of the vineyard (2x; cf. Lord of the vineyard, 31x)
- most precious above all other (cf. desirable above all other, 1 Nephi 11:12)
- mother tree
- natural fruit
- natural tree
- nethermost part[s]
- preserve unto myself
- slackened my hand (cf. slack not thy hand, Joshua 10:6)

spare it a little longer
 spot of ground
 sprung forth (cf. spring forth, Isaiah 43:19)
 stretched forth mine hand
 tame fruit
 tame olive tree
 season and the end
 withersoever I will

Six combinations of words appear in Jacob 5 and in the Book of Mormon, but not in Bible:

will and pleasure
 of no worth
 joy again in
 labor . . . might
 little longer
 it mattereth not

From the early chapters of Genesis (especially the creation account), seven idioms are found in Jacob 5:

and he beheld that it was good (2x; cf., e.g., Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 31)
 be one (Genesis 2:24)
 bring forth (Genesis 1:11, 20, 24; 3:16, 18)
 let us go down (Genesis 11:7; Abraham 4:1, 26)
 for mine own purpose (Moses 1:31, 33)
 from the beginning (cf. Genesis 1:1)
 [The Lord] went his way (Genesis 18:33)

Twenty-one further expressions, easily located with the aid of a computer or a complete concordance, are common to Jacob 5 and other texts of the Old Testament, but not the New Testament:

become corrupt
 both old and young
 [boughs] broken off
 burned with fire—especially of Mt. Sinai

cast away
 come, let us go down
 dig about
 go to
 grieveth me that
 [obey] in all things
 much strength
 only this once
 plucked off
 prepare the way
 shoot forth
 all the day long
 sweep away
 taken hold
 waxed old
 what could I have done more
 young and tender (1 Chronicles 22:5; 29:1, used only of
 Solomon)

Eight phrases in Jacob 5 are common with New Testament vocabulary:

cumber the ground (Luke 13:7)
 evil fruit (Matthew 7:17)
 first, last, last, first (Matthew 19:30)
 it profiteth me nothing (1 Corinthians 13:3)
 natural branches (Romans 11:21)
 once more (Hebrews 12:26–27)
 time draweth near (Luke 21:8)
 wild olive tree (Romans 11:17)

Several other phrases in Jacob 5 that readers of the New Testament might think of as Greek New Testament phrases can also be found in the older texts of the Hebrew Old Testament:

blessed art thou
 cast into the fire
 cast them into the fire

cut down (especially refers to pagan groves and idols in the Old Testament)
 good for nothing
 good fruit
 go thy way
 hew[n] down (especially refers to graven images in the Old Testament)
 withered away

Several conclusions can be suggested from this brief study. First, the phraseology of Jacob 5 is rather characteristic. A significant number of phrases in Jacob 5 are unique to that text in all of scripture. This explains in large measure why listeners readily recognize the allegory of Zenos when it is quoted in sermons or talks.

Second, relatively few words and phrases in Jacob 5 appear also in the New Testament. In view of the overall vocabulary of Jacob 5, those few New Testament words should not be unduly weighted in assessing when the allegory of Zenos was composed. As words and phrases available in the working vocabulary of Joseph Smith, they cluster around only two ideas and were appropriate vehicles through which to communicate to his nineteenth-century audience the translated sense of the ancient allegory with respect to God's impending final judgment of the wicked world (*cumber the ground; evil fruit; first, last, last, first; once more; time draweth near*) and regarding the salient distinction between Israel and the Gentiles (*natural branches, wild olive tree*). It is doubtful, however, that the unprofitability of the tree in Jacob 5 has any connection with Paul's confession that, no matter what else he does, if he has not charity "it profiteth [him] nothing" (1 Corinthians 13:3).

Third, by examining the Old Testament contexts of several phrases that also appear in Jacob 5, further significance of Zenos's messages in the minds of ancient Israelites or

Nephites can be explored. For example, exact phrases that seem to be reminiscent of the theophany on Mount Sinai, for example, *burned with fire*, would probably have reminded any Israelite of the covenant relationship that had been formed in the wilderness between God and his people when Mount Sinai “burned with fire” (Deuteronomy 9:15). Several expressions in Jacob 5 were otherwise used primarily in Israelite literature in connection with early anti-pagan concerns—to *hew down, cut down* pagan groves or idols—and thus it would have horrified the Israelites to think of themselves in the same terms, being cut down or hewn down, just as Jehovah had said that the groves of the Canaanites should be hewn or cut down (Deuteronomy 12:3; Judges 6:25–30). One is drawn to observe that the noun used most often in the allegory is *vineyard* (ninety times); and numerologically, perhaps there is significance in the fact that *master* is mentioned a perfect seven times, while *end, evil, and nethermost* occur an ominous six times. The mixing of phraseology from the creation account into Jacob 5 on several occasions sends the strong message in Israelite terms that God views salvation history in terms of creation, leading to the creation of a spiritual harvest and a united fruitful result in this world.

Finally, some of these words and expressions may help date Zenos. As shown by John Tvedtnes in this volume, in Hebrew at the time of Joshua and in early Israelite history there was only one word for *vineyard* and *orchard*. As further evidence that Zenos may have come from that time period, perhaps the most distinctive finding from the present examination of the words used by Zenos is that the phrase “young and tender,” used four times by Zenos, appears only two other times in scripture, both describing David’s young son Solomon as “young and tender” (1 Chronicles

22:5; 29:1). This supports the hypothesis that Zenos may have written his allegory early in the Israelite monarchy, perhaps in the latter half of David's kingship, but it is impossible to date Zenos with any degree of certainty.

TABLE 1

Vocabulary Distribution in Jacob 5: By Frequency

(369x) the	(32x) bring/brought
(254x) and	(31x) for
(133x) of	(30x) good/goodness
(127x) that	(30x) this
(113x) it/its	(29x) natural
(105x) I	(29x) them/themselves
(100x) had/has/hath/have	(24x) be
(90x) vineyard	(24x) shall
(69x) to	(23x) root/roots
(67x) fruit/fruits	(22x) graft/grafted
(65x) unto	(22x) nourish/nourished
(64x) in/into	(22x) which
(59x) tree/trees	(20x) me
(54x) branch/branches	(20x) not
(53x) beheld/beheldest/ behold/beholdest	(20x) preserve/preserved
(44x) came/come/comest/ cometh	(20x) wild
(43x) my/myself	(20x) time
(41x) he/him/himself/his	(19x) all
(38x) Lord	(18x) a
(38x) thereof	(17x) also
(36x) forth	(16x) away
(36x) said/saith/say/saying	(16x) cast
(36x) they	(16x) last
(36x) will	(15x) again
(34x) servant/servants	(15x) mine
(33x) may	(15x) up
(33x) pass	(15x) we
	(14x) began/begin/begin- neth/beginning/begun

(14x) long/longer	(9x) pluck/plucked
(14x) own	(9x) prune/pruned
(14x) wherefore	(8x) dig/digged/dug
(13x) became/become	(8x) first
(13x) is	(8x) from
(13x) much	(8x) grieveth
(12x) according	(8x) ground
(12x) because	(8x) might
(12x) down	(8x) perhaps
(12x) labor/labored/laboring	(8x) plant/planted
(12x) fire	(7x) like/liken
(12x) part/parts	(7x) master
(12x) season	(7x) overcome
(12x) should	(7x) their
(12x) thou	(7x) went
(11x) against	(6x) end
(11x) are	(6x) evil
(11x) bad	(6x) grow/grown
(11x) do/done	(6x) hither/hitherto
(11x) go	(6x) if
(11x) lay	(6x) more
(11x) strength/strong	(6x) nethermost
(11x) these	(6x) now
(11x) was	(6x) spot
(11x) with	(5x) as
(10x) about	(5x) been
(10x) did/didst	(5x) cumber/cumbered
(10x) let	(5x) even
(10x) perish/perished	(5x) hew/hewn
(10x) self	(5x) look/looked
(10x) take/taken/taking	(5x) no/none
(10x) us	(5x) off
(10x) ye	(5x) once
(9x) but	(5x) other/others
(9x) corrupt/corrupted	(5x) whither/whithersoever
(9x) lose	(5x) yea
(9x) olive/olive-tree	(5x) young

(4x) burn/burned	(3x) profit/profiteth
(4x) cause/caused	(3x) purpose
(4x) draweth	(3x) save
(4x) knew/know/knowest	(3x) saw
(4x) little	(3x) soon
(4x) most	(3x) stead
(4x) mother	(3x) then
(4x) nigh	(3x) there
(4x) nothing	(3x) took
(4x) so	(3x) top
(4x) tame	(3x) were
(4x) thee	(3x) when
(4x) those	(2x) alive
(4x) thus	(2x) call/called
(4x) thy	(2x) day/days
(4x) way	(2x) decay
(4x) what	(2x) exceedingly
(4x) Who/whose	(2x) gather/gathered
(4x) wither/withered	(2x) grew
(4x) word/words	(2x) hid
(3x) another	(2x) house
(3x) at	(2x) Israel
(3x) bitter	(2x) keep/kept
(3x) clear	(2x) laid
(3x) commandments	(2x) main
(3x) could	(2x) many
(3x) diligence/diligent/ diligently	(2x) mattereth
(3x) dung/dunged	(2x) must
(3x) equal	(2x) notwithstanding
(3x) hand	(2x) O
(3x) joy	(2x) old
(3x) land	(2x) only
(3x) one	(2x) place
(3x) our	(2x) precious
(3x) out	(2x) prepare
(3x) poor/poorer/poorest	(2x) ripened
	(2x) some

(2x) sort/sorts	(1x) loftiness
(2x) spare	(1x) man
(2x) speedily	(1x) moisture
(2x) than	(1x) Nay
(2x) thing/things	(1x) near
(2x) until	(1x) Nevertheless
(2x) would	(1x) number
(2x) yet	(1x) obey
(2x) you	(1x) or
(1x) after	(1x) overrun
(1x) almost	(1x) prophet
(1x) art	(1x) pleasure
(1x) bear	(1x) put
(1x) blessed	(1x) rejoice
(1x) body	(1x) sent
(1x) both	(1x) second
(1x) broken	(1x) shoot
(1x) canst	(1x) size
(1x) care	(1x) slackened
(1x) change	(1x) something
(1x) choice	(1x) somewhat
(1x) commanded	(1x) spoken
(1x) Counsel	(1x) sprung
(1x) cut	(1x) stretched
(1x) died	(1x) sufficiently
(1x) every	(1x) sweep
(1x) except	(1x) taste
(1x) faster	(1x) therefore
(1x) few	(1x) thrive
(1x) glory	(1x) together
(1x) hear	(1x) too
(1x) Hearken	(1x) trim
(1x) here	(1x) watch
(1x) hold	(1x) waxed
(1x) hoped	(1x) wept
(1x) How	(1x) whence
(1x) kinds	(1x) worth
(1x) lest	

Notes

1. This statistic is necessarily imprecise because it is often difficult to decide whether to count two forms of the same word as one word or as two; but this number is a serviceable estimation for present purposes.

2. *Dung* is found in the Old Testament as a noun, but only in the New Testament as a verb (Luke 13:8).

3. I appreciate the assistance of Kathleen Reynolds in compiling these figures.

9

Graft and Corruption: On Olives and Olive Culture in the Pre-Modern Mediterranean

John Gee and Daniel C. Peterson

In the background of Zenos's parable of the olive tree is a vastly important element of ancient society, olive culture. In both classical Roman and ancient Hebrew civilizations, the olive was viewed as first among trees.¹ In some ways, it is astonishing that the contemporary interest of American and other scholars in economic history has yet to chronicle or adequately describe something as important as olive culture in antiquity. Nevertheless, several facets of Zenos's parable shine with considerably more brilliance when placed against the background of ancient olive cultivation and trade. It is this background that we will explore in the present paper.²

LEXICOGRAPHY

There are four etymological stems referring to the olive in the ancient Mediterranean and Near East: (1) Sumerian *girim*, (2) Akkadian *serdu*, (3) West Semitic *zyt*, and (4) Greek *elaia*. The Sumerian *girim*, written with the LAGAB sign,³ probably indicates the shape of the fruit and thus might best be rendered "oval," or "ellipsoid," or even "berry."⁴ And, indeed, the Mesopotamians seem to have considered the olive a berry, as did the Chinese, the Anglo-Saxons, and

the Germans; the Romans, on the other hand, considered it a nut.⁵

The Akkadian *serdu*, listed as the second of our stems above, may well derive from the common West Semitic *zyt*, which is our third.⁶ The Hittites, an ancient Indo-European people of the Anatolian peninsula (modern-day Turkey), simply wrote the Akkadian word for olives;⁷ they borrowed the word as they had the product, for "the olive does not flourish on the highlands" of the Anatolian plateau.⁸ It is yet "another instance of the debt owed by the Hittite culture to its eastern neighbors."⁹ Semitic *zyt* is the source of Ugaritic (*zyt*), Hebrew (*zayit*), Egyptian (*dt* or *ddtw*),¹⁰ Coptic (*joeit*), Arabic (*zayt*), Persian (*zeitun*), Armenian (*jē*),¹¹ and even Chinese (*ci-tun*) words for olives.¹² The Greek word is the source of the Etruscan (*eleivana*),¹³ Latin (*olea*) and subsequent Romance, and Germanic (Middle High German *olîve*),¹⁴ German (*Olive*), English ("olive"), Old Norse (*olifa*), and Icelandic (*olifa*) words for both olive and oil.¹⁵ From the philological evidence, it would seem that the olive originated in the area of Syro-Palestine, or possibly (though unlikely), in the Cyclades; the Near Eastern evidence antedates the Hellenic.

Most of the words for oil in these languages relate somehow to olive oil. The Greek term for "oil" (*elaion*; cf. English "oil" itself, as well as French *huile*), for example, comes from the word for "olive" (*elaia*); but not all *elaion* is olive oil.¹⁶ One of the most important Arabic terms for oil, in the sense of "petroleum," is *zayt*, from *zaytun* ("olive"). We leave it as an exercise for the interested reader to trace out the analogous etymological lines that run through the other languages.

ANCIENT OLIVE GROWING

The Mediterranean area constitutes a single "climatic region," marked by winter rains and long summer droughts, by light soils and dry farming for the most

part, in contrast to the irrigation farming on which so much of the ancient Near Eastern economy was based. It is a region of relatively easy habitation and much outdoor living, producing on its best soils, the coastal plains and the large inland plateaus, a good supply of the staple cereal grasses, vegetables and fruits, in particular grapes and olives, with suitable pasture for small animals, sheep, pigs and goats, but not on the whole for cattle. . . . The olive-tree flourishes even in summer drought but, though not labour-intensive, it demands attention and it requires time, since the tree does not bear for the first ten or twelve years.¹⁷

The olive tree¹⁸ thrives in the hot, dry summers and the often cool and sometimes damp winters of the Mediterranean area. Indeed, it can live to be a thousand years old, and some specimens in the region are even claimed to date from Roman times.¹⁹ The olive tree has a small core, a small central root with large twisting shallow roots radiating therefrom.²⁰ Its trunk is likely to produce bulges and abnormal growths in the stem, leaving it with a characteristically gnarled appearance.²¹ The olive is an evergreen, with a narrow leaf that is green on top but somewhat whiter on the underside and that grows at the end of a short twig. Olive flowers look much like olive leaves.²² The olive berry, which occurs clustered around the branches, consists of a firm flesh surrounding a pit.²³ Not surprisingly, Theophrastus, the fourth-century B.C. scholar who studied under Aristotle and succeeded him as the director of the Aristotelian school, reports that the fruit of the tree tastes "oily" (*elaiōdeis*).²⁴ So important was it in its traditional area that, for instance, no Roman garden was considered complete without at least some olive trees.²⁵ The olive does not, however, grow well far beyond the Mediterranean. Marcus Terentius Varro, a Roman writer of the first century B.C., recalled with perhaps

some surprise, "When I led the army near the Rhine in the interior of Transalpine Gaul, I was in many regions where neither vines, nor olives, nor fruit trees grew."²⁶ Varro's countrymen thought that the olive must have neither too warm nor too cold a climate, and neither too high nor too low an altitude, and supposed that it did not grow more than a hundred miles from the sea.²⁷

The ancient Romans, with their penchant for handbooks and manuals, wrote many treatises on horticulture for those of the nobility who had just come into their estates and had not the slightest idea how to run them.²⁸ The principal interest in farming was not to feed the hungry, but to fatten the wallet.²⁹ Olive oil was considered by many to be the equivalent of money, literally in liquid form.³⁰ In writing these manuals, they borrowed extensively from the works of their predecessors in Greece and Carthage. One of these was the Carthaginian Mago, who had written twenty-eight volumes on agriculture, a good many of which dealt with the olive.³¹ The Carthaginians, of course, being a Phoenician colony, had taken their olives and olive culture from Syro-Palestine. Thus the following summation, taken mainly from Greek and Roman records, is probably somewhat indicative of Palestinian olive culture as well. We note occasional parallels to Jacob 5, but emphasize that Joseph Smith could not have concocted Jacob 5 out of the four dry Romans and the pedantic Greek who are our sources.³²

General

A sizable plot of land in a Mediterranean climate with proper soil conditions is a prerequisite for good olive production,³³ and to grow olives Roman style (and likely Palestinian style as well), one needs several slaves or servants (cf. Jacob 5:7, 10–11, 15–16, 20–21, 25–30, 33–35, 38, 41,

48–50, 57, 61–62, 70–72, 75),³⁴ and several farm animals.³⁵ One also needs a fair amount of equipment.³⁶ Of course, the villa is placed uphill of the vineyards and fields,³⁷ and upwind of the manure pile. Olives should not be irrigated, as it spoils the fruit.³⁸

Wild versus Tame Olives

Olives, writes Theophrastus, come in two varieties: wild (*kotinos*) and tame (*elaa*).³⁹ “Wild plants seem to bear more, as the wild pear and olive, but the tame bear better fruit.”⁴⁰ Not only did the wild olive produce more than the tame, but it was more tenacious and hardy.⁴¹ Ancient authors knew very well that “it is not possible for a wild olive to produce tame olives” through any amount of cultivation,⁴² yet Theophrastus reports that “they say that certain such changes may occur by themselves (*automatān*), sometimes the fruit and sometimes even the whole tree, which the prophets (*hoi manteis*) think are signs (*sēmeia*). . . . Even from a tame olive may come a wild olive and from a wild olive may come a tame olive (though that is rare).”⁴³

Planting

Olive trees, the Roman guides inform us, should be planted in heavy, warm soil (for pickling, long, Sallentine, orcite, posea, Sergian, Columnian, and white varieties; thin, cold soil for the Licinian variety) about twenty-five to thirty (Roman) feet apart.⁴⁴ The land should be low lying, should face west, and should have good exposure to the sun.⁴⁵ Olives should be planted just after the vernal equinox.⁴⁶ Though olives may be propagated in nearly any way a plant may be propagated (including cases where an olive tree grew accidentally from an olive stake driven in the ground)⁴⁷—indeed, “the olive grows in more ways than any

other plant”⁴⁸—propagation by shoots and grafting was preferred to planting seeds, because seeds took so long to get going.⁴⁹ Seeds of tame trees also tend, if not carefully watched, to produce wild olives.⁵⁰

The olive would send forth a ring of shoots about the base and propagate itself that way, sometimes even swallowing objects.⁵¹ These shoots were taken from the base of the tree by first burying their tips into the ground so they would take root, and, two years later, digging them up and transplanting them.⁵² The slips should be one (Roman) foot long and should be planted (positioned as they were on the original tree) in trenches three and one half (Roman) feet deep and three (Roman) feet long.⁵³ The shoots should be spaded once monthly for three years.⁵⁴ Transplanting may take place in the autumn if the ground is dry; it is done much like the propagation of shoots, though the trees are pruned if they are broader than the palm.⁵⁵ Transplanted olives tend to have a rather delicate top that needs to be protected.⁵⁶

Grafting

Grafting was also to be done in the spring (in the dark of the moon).⁵⁷ A clean diagonal cut on the tree was preferable. The cultivator sharpened the end of the graft (which was, like the slips, one foot long), and then drove it into the tree, matching bark to bark. He smeared the joint with dung and dirt and, finally, bound it with some splints to support the graft.⁵⁸ Buds could also be grafted, so long as there was a bark to bark match.⁵⁹ Grafting, we are informed, increased the production of the trees.⁶⁰ Its importance in ancient Palestine is shown in the fact that it was regulated by Jewish law.⁶¹

Pruning

“All trees need pruning. . . . Androtion says that the

myrtle and the olive require the most pruning.⁶² The olive-grove must be pruned every few years.⁶³ The Roman proverb was, "He who ploughs the olive grove, asks for fruit; he who dungs, begs; but he who prunes, coerces fruit!"⁶⁴ This is so because the olive bears only on the previous year's wood.⁶⁵ According to the Roman manuals, olive yards should be pruned fifteen days before the vernal equinox, and trimmed for the next forty-five days.⁶⁶ According to Columella, a grower does not want one branch doing too much better than the others.⁶⁷ For the Jews, the Sabbatical year was not only a time of pruning olives but particularly for hewing them down to be cast into the fire.⁶⁸ During the trimming of the tree, what is not used for shoots is stacked outside on flooring, as what Cato terms "firewood for the master" (cf. Jacob 5:9, 42, 49);⁶⁹ the wood, being medium-grained, hard, crooked, brittle, and knotty, is good only for burning.⁷⁰

Digging

Trenches should be dug about olives in the spring, and again in autumn.⁷¹ Digging should be deep enough to keep the roots away from the surface but not so deep as to kill the tree.⁷² Hoeing should be done frequently.⁷³

Nourishing

Poor soil could lessen the olive crop, and for this reason, the trees were nourished.⁷⁴ Nourishing was done either by using the lees of the pressing process,⁷⁵ or by using lime as fertilizer.⁷⁶

Dunging

Manure was the reason the ancient olive grower kept all



Olive harvest, from a Greek black-figure vase (sixth century B.C.), shows workers knocking olives to the ground and picking them up by hand. In ancient Mediterranean economies, olives were one of the most valuable and useful crops.

those animals on his farm. So, when the weather was bad and he had nothing better to do, the prudent olive cultivator worked on his manure collection.⁷⁷ Olives, our classical experts inform us, should get one quarter of the farm's output of manure.⁷⁸ Pigeon dung, Varro explains, is the best,⁷⁹ while Columella recommends goat dung, and Androtion says that it does not matter so long as the dung is the most pungent available.⁸⁰ And, of course, manure should only be hauled in the dark of the moon.⁸¹ Though nourishing with vegetable fertilizer is done every year, dunging, thankfully, was recommended only for every third year.⁸²

Harvesting

Anciently, as it does today, harvest occurred late in the year, in September or October, when the fruit was not yet

fully ripe, or even during the winter, when the high winter winds whip through the trees.⁸³ The olives would drip oil when they were ripe,⁸⁴ but the best oil was made from unripe olives—just as they began to turn black, a stage the Greeks called *drypetides* and the Romans called *druppae*.⁸⁵ When harvest came, it was important to get the olives harvested before the wind knocked the fruit off the trees and bruised it; no one wants mushy olives.⁸⁶ Therefore, preparations had to be done in advance of the harvest.⁸⁷ As olives grow on top and all sides of the tree,⁸⁸ they were best picked from ladders instead of by shaking the trees (which might bruise the fruit). If the tree had to be shaken, prudent cultivators were advised not to do so by beating the tree. Otherwise, they might have to call in a tree-doctor and lose the next year's crop as well.⁸⁹ Should the *paterfamilias* so desire, he could hire out his harvesting or sell the olives to anyone willing to harvest them.⁹⁰

Pressing

"The preparation of olive oil requires even more skill than that of wine," says Pliny.⁹¹ Immediately after harvesting, the olives should be pressed; oil thus expeditiously produced is better and less likely to be rancid.⁹² Numerous ancient devices for the production of olive oil have been found throughout the lands of the Bible. Essentially, there were two distinct processes. The first and simplest method was to tread the olives and then, when they were properly crushed, to place them into special baskets from which their oil could be drained into a basin. The top layer was then skimmed off. This was the Bible's "first oil" or "pounded oil," which was used for lighting lamps (Exodus 27:20),⁹³ anointing,⁹⁴ and offerings;⁹⁵ the process is recalled in the prophet Micah's warning to the wicked that "thou shalt

sow, but thou shalt not reap; thou shalt tread the olives, but thou shalt not anoint thee with oil" (Micah 6:15, KJV). Another method, which has obviously left behind it more tangible archaeological remains, involved a huge stone wheel, which "pressed" the olives against a circular stone basin, the stone having been roughened and hardened on the surface.⁹⁶ The oil ran off through a groove in the basin and was then either allowed to sit so that the sediment would sink and the pure oil would rise to the top or was strained to separate the "pure" or "beaten" oil. With their tendency to value efficiency over elegance, the Romans preferred milling the olives to get their oil.⁹⁷

A second stage in the general process returned the olive pulp to its vat where it was heated and again crushed, this time by a large beam anchored in a wall niche and weighted down with stones. (Our Latin manuals insist, however, that olive *seeds* should not be crushed, lest the oil have a bitter flavor.)⁹⁸ The Romans preferred a lead cauldron to a copper one, because a copper cauldron gave the oil a bitter taste.⁹⁹ (The lead cauldron only gave them lead poisoning—*de gustibus non disputandum est.*) Smoke will also impart a bad taste.¹⁰⁰ The *amurca*—or lees, the watery fluid that was pressed out of the olives along with the oil, which settled—was boiled down to two-thirds of its original volume and was then stored in jars or earthenware.¹⁰¹ *Amurca* was used in moderate quantities as a fertilizer and herbicide—significantly, in larger quantities it functioned only as an herbicide and pesticide¹⁰²—and was also used to cure new jars.¹⁰³ The pressed oilives were used for fertilizer.¹⁰⁴ The watchman generally took charge of the olive pressing, although it could be hired out, as well.¹⁰⁵ (It was in the latter business that the great pre-Socratic philosopher Thales became the richest man in Greece.)¹⁰⁶

A good tree could reasonably be expected to yield enough olives to produce ten to fifteen gallons of oil annually. (Rabbi Meir thought it impossible for an olive to be barren.)¹⁰⁷ In ancient Greece, wine production has been estimated to have averaged approximately 1140 liters or more per hectare, and olive oil at a tenth of that, or 114 liters per hectare.¹⁰⁸

Storage

The head of the household, our manuals advise, should have a well-built barn and plenty of vats to hold his oil and wine until prices are most favorable and he can make a killing in the market.¹⁰⁹ The storage cellar should be warm, flat, large enough to accommodate the harvest and located near the kitchen.¹¹⁰ Of course, the would-be speculator must not wait too long, as olive oil does not age well and goes rancid after a year—ancient storage being what it was. Therefore it was to be liberally used.¹¹¹ He should also store all the olives he can, so he can issue them, sparingly, to his hands.¹¹² Olives of the *orcite* and *posea* variety were preserved either green or in brine—or in oil, if bruised.¹¹³ Black *orcite* varieties could be salted and dried, or preserved in boiled must.¹¹⁴ White and black olives were steeped in salt before storage.¹¹⁵ Green olives, our advisors suggest, should be bruised and soaked in water several times and finally steeped in vinegar and salt. Of course, olives can be used in many recipes.¹¹⁶ The green variety, for instance, should be served with a fennel, mastic, and vinegar dressing.¹¹⁷

Seasons of the Year

An accomplished farmer, says Varro, can actually tell the seasons by watching olive leaves.¹¹⁸ The method, according to Theophrastus, relied upon the fact that the leaves

seemed to turn upside down after the summer solstice, leaving the lighter green side toward the sun.¹¹⁹ And, indeed, olive culture, as described by our classical Latin authorities, followed strongly seasonal patterns. Spring was the time for pruning, planting, grafting, nourishing, and digging around the olives, as well as for gathering firewood.¹²⁰ During the summer, by contrast, when the olive flowers, the trees required little care or attention.¹²¹ The pace picked up again in autumn, when trenches were dug around the trees and they were dunged.¹²² Rain after the flowering season could be devastating for the fruit.¹²³ (The richness of the harvest could also be adversely affected by diseases, by rain or winds at the wrong times, and by worms.)¹²⁴ Classical olive lore held that the fruit grew in size, though not in oil content, after the rise of Arcturus in mid-September.¹²⁵ Winter, as mentioned, was and is the harvest season for olives,¹²⁶ as well as the time when the oil is pressed.¹²⁷

DOMESTICATION OF THE OLIVE

Interesting and tantalizing questions surround the domestication of the olive, questions that are beyond the scope of this paper. Three observations, however, are relevant here. First, archaeological evidence is sometimes adduced to support the claim that the earliest domesticated olives known to us—supposedly to be distinguished from their wild relatives by the generally somewhat larger size of their pits—have been found at Chalcolithic sites from the fourth millennium B.C., like the modern Teleilat Ghassul near the northern tip of the Dead Sea. However, since the size of the pits of the olive offers no decisive indication of domestication or lack thereof,¹²⁸ archaeological evidence cannot at the present time determine the date at which

domestication of the olive first occurred. Therefore, all evidence on this question must be historical or philological. Second, although the earliest records of the olive from Mesopotamia (essentially, modern Iraq) date to Sargonic times (circa 2350 B.C.), they mention only the wood of the olive, and not the fruit.¹²⁹ This might be taken to imply that, at this period, the olive had not yet been domesticated. However, mention of *dt*-oil in the Pyramid Texts would seem to argue against such a conclusion, since the word *dt* can be plausibly linked with the West Semitic root for olives, *zyt*, mentioned previously.¹³⁰ Thus, *dt*-oil can be argued to be olive oil.¹³¹ The early date of the Pyramid Texts, if our identification of *dt*-oil with olive oil is accepted, would seem to cast doubt on the notion that the olive had not yet been domesticated by 2334–2151 B.C., and would suggest that the fact that the first Mesopotamian references to the olive refer to its wood rather than to its fruit may derive simply from accidents of historical preservation.¹³² We suggest it as likely, therefore, that olive cultivation was well established in the Near East by the Early Bronze Age (which is to say, in the third millennium B.C.). Although some have claimed priority for Greece and the Aegean islands as the location of earliest olive cultivation, these regions simply lack either the historical or philological evidence to establish this proposition, and, as the situation currently stands, the credit must go to the Near East.¹³³

THE SPREAD OF THE OLIVE

Olive products were first imported into Mesopotamia during the Sargonic period (ca. 2350 B.C.).¹³⁴ As noted immediately above, Mesopotamian evidence indicates that the olive was first imported for its wood and only later for its fruit and oil.¹³⁵ Assurnasirpal (883–859 B.C.) and Sennacherib

(704–681 B.C.) both attempted to cultivate olives in Assyria as part of the royal botanical gardens.¹³⁶ However, their attempts seem to have been unsuccessful, for, centuries later, Herodotus could report that olives had never grown in Mesopotamia.¹³⁷ (Sesame was the usual oil in Mesopotamia, occupying the place in culinary and other usage that was elsewhere largely reserved for olive oil.)¹³⁸ Nevertheless, it seems likely that the Hittites of Anatolia were introduced to olives by Mesopotamians, since Hittite texts (written in an Indo-European language but in a cuneiform script of Mesopotamian origin) use only a Mesopotamian (specifically a Semitic, Akkadian) term to describe the olive.¹³⁹ Mesopotamian olives, in turn, seem to have come from Murar and from Ugarit (modern Ras Shamra, on the Syrian coast), where they were everyday items of commodity exchange.¹⁴⁰

Olive oil is first attested in Egypt—apart from the Old Kingdom reference discussed above—in the Second Intermediate Period, when the Hyksos imported it into Egypt along with their rule.¹⁴¹ In general the Egyptians used Moringa oil, among others.¹⁴² The olive itself first appeared in Egypt during the Amarna period (circa 1350 B.C.) and is attested in the area of Thebes (modern Luxor) during the Twentieth Dynasty, or the Rameside era.¹⁴³ At first, the olives were brought into Egypt from Syro-Palestine and later from Greece.¹⁴⁴ Olive oil seems generally to have been “imported from Crete, Palestine, and the Aegean.”¹⁴⁵ Attempts were also made to *plant* olives in the Nile valley, but, as in the case of Mesopotamia, they never grew very well there—no matter how hard the Egyptians prayed—because there was simply not enough rainfall.¹⁴⁶ Rostovtzeff is quite correct when he points to the excellent climate of Egypt, to its steady water supply, its fertile and adaptable

soil. "Egypt in the eyes of the rest of the ancient world," he says, "was an agricultural Eldorado, a gift bestowed by the bountiful Nile on its people."¹⁴⁷ But, while it was marvelously suited to cereals, vegetables, grass, and fruit trees, the Nile valley was never very successful at producing olives. (Nor were its vineyards of much note.)¹⁴⁸

In the Hellenistic or Ptolemaic period, Greek settlers—often, in the earliest days, demobilized soldiers—brought with them their expertise in such arts as viticulture and olive growing and attempted to replicate along the Nile the life they had known in their native land. Landowners once again, they sought—apparently with the necessary approval of the government in the case of these particular crops—to produce the wine and olive oil, which they had come to value in their youth, and thus to eliminate the need of expensive imports.¹⁴⁹ Theophrastus reports that the olive did manage to grow in the area of Thebes, although the oil was of inferior quality. He does not, however, say that it grew very well.¹⁵⁰ And, in fact, domestic Egyptian production of olive oil seems never to have done away with the need for imports. Thus in Rostovtzeff's *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World* we read of one Apollonius, manager of affairs for one of the Ptolemaic kings, and of his regular shipments of Syrian incense, myrrh, wine, and olive oil.¹⁵¹

The olive appears to flourish best in the climate of Syro-Palestine, Greece, Italy, and Spain. We have already seen that both Egypt and Mesopotamia seem originally to have obtained their olives from the area of modern Syria, Lebanon, and Israel, and we now hazard the informed guess that Greece and Italy likewise owe their olive culture to that small area along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean. (Such diffusion of agricultural elements from the Syro-Palestine westward along the northern coast of the

Mediterranean is not without parallel. In somewhat later times, we know, the chicken was introduced into the Greek landscape from the Near East.)¹⁵² Indeed, if indications that wild olives grow only in northern Israel have any validity, we can infer with some confidence that the area of what would come to be known as the southern kingdom imported the tame olive from the area of the northern kingdom. The Mishnah states that the best olive trees for the making of oil are those of Tekoa (Teqoah), to the northwest of the Sea of Galilee, followed by those of Regeb (Regeb).¹⁵³ Thus, from the meager historical evidence, it would seem that it was *northern* Syro-Palestine that was the olive's native home.¹⁵⁴ This may help to explain why Lehi, with his background in the northern kingdom, appears to have had access to a parable of olive growing and why our modern Bible, with its background in Judea, lacks the parable of Zenos.¹⁵⁵

Though the earliest Greek records, the Minoan tablets in Linear B, mention olives,¹⁵⁶ Greek legends all point to an importation of the olive into Greece. However, the legends disagree as to the ultimate source of the olive tree, as well as on the question of the identity of the person who brought it into Greek-speaking territory and on the location that first enjoyed its benefits.

In the third of his *Olympian Odes*, the great poet Pindar (died 438 B.C.) alludes to a story according to which the "olive-spray" was brought by Heracles "from Ister, from the shady springs, as the best memorial of the Olympic games, obtained by persuading the Hyperborean folk who serve Apollo." Heracles had been rather embarrassed by the treelessness of Olympia, and, remembering an earlier adventure in the forests of Ister—in modern Rumania where the Danube River empties into the Black Sea and where a Greek colony was established sometime before 600 B.C.—had

determined to go there and bring back some foliage.¹⁵⁷ Thus, this tale supports the general notion that the olive tree was an import into the Hellenic world. But, according to Theophrastus, the olives at Olympia from which the wreaths were made were wild, not tame.¹⁵⁸ Thus, it is not particularly surprising to learn that, even in Roman times, the tribes of Ister were coming to Aquileia, at the head of the Adriatic Sea, to trade slaves, cattle, and hides for, among other things, wine and olive oil.¹⁵⁹ Their olives, like those that Heracles is supposed to have taken from them and brought to Olympia, must have been wild.

The Heracleian legend is not the only bit of Greek lore surrounding the entry of the olive into Hellenic territory. Most Greek sanctuaries, it will be recalled, were associated with sacred trees. In Athens, the holy tree was a sacred olive that grew on the Acropolis near the temple of Athena and was carefully tended in the sanctuary of the dew goddess, Pandrosos.¹⁶⁰ A famous Athenian legend recounts how the olive—the domesticated olive, not merely the wild olive—was a gift from the goddess Athena for the benefit of mankind. “When the gods in ancient times were quarrelling over the Attic land, Athena caused this tree to grow and thereby secured Athens for herself, while Poseidon, with the salt-water spring which he had struck from the rock, was obliged to stand down.”¹⁶¹ Therefore, the olive is sacred to Athena.¹⁶² “Together with Zeus she watches over olive trees in general.”¹⁶³ (To Minerva, the Roman syncretization of Athena, the olive was so sacred that goats were not sacrificed to her since it was believed that the goat’s saliva sterilized the tree.)¹⁶⁴ Just as the olive wreath was bestowed upon the winners at the Olympic games—which brought amazed comments from barbarian onlookers, who could not comprehend a competition for something other than

money and power—olive oil was the prize to the victors at Athena's festival, the Panathenaia.¹⁶⁵ All over Attica, *moriae* or sacred olive trees were assumed to be offshoots of the original tree planted by Athena on the Acropolis. Such trees, and even the stumps of such trees, were protected within fences and were regularly inspected by representatives of the ruling Athenian council—perhaps in the hope that they might revive in the same way that the olive tree in Athena's temple had returned to life after its burning by the Persian invader Xerxes. In earliest times, the penalty for removing a sacred olive tree or a sacred olive stump was death, but by the classical period the penalty had been reduced to mere exile and confiscation of property.¹⁶⁶

Whether imported wild into Olympia by Heracles or tame into Athens by Athena, the Greeks considered the olive a gift from the gods—and one, interestingly enough, granted specifically for cultic functions. The earliest references to olives and olive oil in the Linear B tablets are for cultic purposes.¹⁶⁷ Eventually, the cultivation of the olive spread to Miletus, the important Greek settlement in Asia Minor, and to such islands of the Aegean and the Mediterranean as Samos, Lesbos (notably in Mytilene), Rhodes, and Crete. (In the case of the latter two islands, at least, it may first have been introduced by the Phoenicians. Again, we note the connection with Syro-Palestine.)¹⁶⁸

The olive tree flourished with all this Greek attention. "There is not the slightest doubt," writes Rostovtzeff, "that even in the third century [B.C.] Greece was one of the best cultivated countries in the world. Her vineyards and olive-groves, her fruit-gardens and kitchen gardens were famous."¹⁶⁹ Ironically, if we are correct in seeing the east coast of the Mediterranean as the olive's original homeland, the Greek olive industry soon outpaced the Levantine cul-

tivators to whom, indirectly, it owed its existence. Relatively early in Athenian history, probably by the seventh century B.C., the desire of the upper class for luxuries led to a lucrative export trade with the Levant in olive oil, wine, and other agricultural products. Leading Athenian farmers, organized into commodity markets and possibly even into agricultural cooperatives, specialized in olive trees and vines. Olive culture and vine culture seem already before the time of the great sage Solon, a contemporary of Lehi, to have expanded at the expense of grain cultivation in the vicinity of Athens. Both vines and olive trees are suitable, after all, for stony and less fertile soils, and, as is evident throughout this paper, they are often associated with one another. However, Attic wine has never been especially highly esteemed, and it was first and foremost the cultivation of the olive that gave Athenian agriculture its economic clout. "When we come to consider Athenian exports," writes R. J. Hopper, "among natural products the oil obtained from the olive berry naturally occurs first to mind, owing to the traditional association of the city of Athens with the olive tree and fruit, the gift of Athena."¹⁷⁰

In the earliest days of their trade with Greece, Phoenician traders were content to accept slaves, hides, and cattle in exchange for their goods. It was not long, however, before Greece was able to add to these products of a relatively primitive economy excellent wine and olive oil. Such luxury goods—produced by Greek and, above all, by Athenian agriculture—played an important role in the life of the Syrian, Phoenician, and Palestinian cities. Greek wine- and oil-jars are often found in the tombs and the ruins of the Greek colonies in Syro-Palestine. And the consumption of wine and olive oil was not limited to the Greeks settled in these cities. Such jars have also been found in graves

that apparently do not belong to Greek immigrants. "A no less important customer was Egypt," notes Rostovtzeff, "where indeed Greek wine and olive-oil were probably consumed in larger quantities than in Syria, Phoenicia, and Palestine."¹⁷¹ (Rostovtzeff does not, however, seem to realize that the olive was native to Syro-Palestine and not to Egypt, and he therefore makes nothing of the distinction.)

A similar situation existed in the cities of Pontus, a region of northern Asia Minor, whose dependence upon the Greek motherland for these products extended from at least the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. into the Hellenistic period. Greek wine and olive oil also went to Sicily, while the tribes of south and central Italy; the Etruscans; the Celts of northern Italy and of Gaul; the Iberians of Spain; the Illyrians and the Thracians of the Adriatic coast, of the Danubian regions, and of the northern part of the Balkan peninsula; the Scythians of the south Russian steppes; the Lycians, Lydians, Phrygians, Thracians, and other peoples of Asia Minor, Egypt, Cyprus, Syria, Phoenicia, Palestine, Arabia, Mesopotamia, and even Iran—all became customers of Greece and absorbed steadily increasing quantities not only of Greek wine and Greek oil, but also of Greek industrial products. The high point of this Greek commercial expansion was reached in the fifth century B.C., following the Persian wars and the creation of the Athenian empire.¹⁷²

It is generally agreed that the olive was an import into Italy, where it arrived relatively early—apparently from Greece.¹⁷³ (A clue to this is the fact that the Etruscan word for "olive," *eleivana*, is borrowed from the Greek *elaia*, and that the name for the containing vessel was borrowed as well.)¹⁷⁴ Thus, if we are correct, the olive was merely continuing its westward migration from the Levant. Within Italy, its movement seems to have been from the south to the

north, which is not surprising in view of the history of Greek colonization in the area. It seems likely that "at a very early date the Greek cities of Southern Italy and of Sicily took up the culture of the vine and olive on an extensive scale in competition with their motherlands and with the Punic cities of Africa."¹⁷⁵ (Those Punic African cities, it will be recalled, were Phoenician colonies, and their olive culture, in an example of westward migration along the *southern* coast of the Mediterranean, was directly linked to Syro-Palestine.) It was not until the consulship of Pompey, in the first century B.C., that the production of olive oil within Italy proper was sufficient for export.¹⁷⁶

The rise of olive cultivation as a major factor in the Roman economy clearly had an effect on politics, as well. One example should serve to make this clear: Since business and war, economics and politics, can be closely connected, it should not surprise us that one of the principal targets of early Italian military raids was often the enemy's vineyards and olive groves.¹⁷⁷ Cato's famous dictum, *ceterum censeo delendam esse Carthaginem*, repeated at the end of every speech he gave in the Roman senate, may well have been uttered on behalf of a consortium of Italian landowners "endeavouring to get rid of a dangerous rival and to transform her territory from a land of gardens, vineyards, and olive-groves into one of vast cornfields."¹⁷⁸ Carthage, after all, had usually exchanged its wine and olive oil for Italian grain, and the ever-more-ambitious Romans and their allies seem to have felt that, since olives were more profitable than grain, they were getting the short end of the deal.¹⁷⁹ Italians had invested large amounts of land and money in the culture of olive and vine, and thus they willingly gave tacit support to Rome's ruthless policies against Carthage and against the spread of olive and vine

culture to the western provinces.¹⁸⁰ It did not matter that the best olives came from Africa,¹⁸¹ Roman olive growers and speculators, not surprisingly, were more interested in money. Even before the war, in Rome, you could buy anything in this world with olive oil.¹⁸²

The war, however, proved a boon to cultivation of the olive in Italy. Areas west and north of the Roman heartland soon became lucrative markets for the Roman olive in the absence of any Carthaginian competition. Gaul, for instance, was a rich country, very eager to buy wine and olive oil, which "it [could] not produce in sufficient quantities."¹⁸³ Trade flourished. When Julius Caesar launched into his Gallic wars (58–51 B.C.), he could rely heavily on intelligence supplied by Roman merchants who had long preceded his army into that area of the world.¹⁸⁴

The Roman civil wars following Julius Caesar's death did not alter the situation of Italian horticulture or olive culture to any great extent, at least not immediately.¹⁸⁵ Indeed, the disruptions that accompanied them may have hindered change. During the days of the early empire, olives were, with grapes, the principal crop of Italy, Greece, and Asia Minor and played the leading part in the economic life of these regions. It was these areas whose agricultural surplus provisioned the far-scattered Roman army. Greece and Asia Minor supplied the eastern provinces of Rome and the shores of the Black Sea—especially the northern shores, but also the ancient Ister on the west—with oil and wine. Italy itself was the chief source of supply for the Danubian provinces, as also for Germany, Britain, and Africa. Even Gaul and Spain continued to import these products from Italy, for a time.¹⁸⁶

With the emigration of Italians to the western provinces under Augustus and his successors, however, viticulture was

allowed to spread to Gaul. Olive culture spread to Africa and Spain, with many ambitious colonists drawn by the huge profits, there for the mere plucking, to enter into competition with the motherland. Italians moving into Histria (the Greeks' Ister) transformed "almost the whole of South Histria . . . into an olive plantation" modelled on Italian counterparts.¹⁸⁷ (And the olive oil from Histria could compete with the best from Italy.)¹⁸⁸ Dalmatia picked up the olive only after Roman occupation, but soon modelled its plantations after their predecessors in Italy and Histria.¹⁸⁹ Africa, famous for its olives not so many years before, became so again: "The production of large quantities of olive-oil . . . gave the cities of Tripolitania their wealth and prosperity, and enabled them to pay heavy tribute in cash to Carthage, to give [Augustus] Caesar an enormous contribution of olive-oil (three million *librae*), and later to make a voluntary gift of oil to Septimius Severus [died A.D. 211]," from which he financed his *sparsio*.¹⁹⁰ It is surprising to realize that, in imperial Roman times, there were "olive-groves, extending for mile after mile over regions where in our own days a few sheep and camels live a half-starved life in the dry prairie."¹⁹¹

While what now seems like a natural growth of olive culture into the western provinces "had been stunted first by the selfish policy of the agrarian magnates of the second century B.C., and then by the civil wars of the first century," such obstacles had now vanished.¹⁹² The resulting changes were swift in coming and, from the perspective of the old olive-growing areas, were serious and occasionally catastrophic.

By the end of the first century A.D., Greece and Italy and even Asia Minor were dependent for grain on other countries that produced it in large quantities, as they could not. Greece and Asia Minor were fed by southern Russia, while the Italian peninsula looked anxiously to Sicily, Sardinia,

Spain, Gaul, Africa, and Egypt for its support. The spread of the culture of vines and olive trees, both in the West and in the East, meant not only economic ruin for Italy (owing to a shortage of agricultural products for exchange), but could, in very rough times, result in a corn (grain) famine throughout the Empire, as indeed happened in A.D. 93.¹⁹³ Rome had claimed Egypt as a personal dominion of Caesar under Augustus, and thus had the bread basket of the empire to supply it, but Greece and Asia Minor, less fortunate, were obliged to tough it out with only the dwindling supplies from southern Russia. These were diminished still further by the imperial army's share, for the Roman government had prohibited "the export of corn [grain] from Egypt to other places than Rome save in exceptional cases."¹⁹⁴ "Thus over-production of wine and olive-oil both in the East and in the West meant a permanent crisis in the East."¹⁹⁵

Obviously, "the Roman government could not afford to let the Eastern provinces starve." Hence, emperors took measures to encourage grain production and to limit that of wine and oil. But little is known about such measures.¹⁹⁶ As moralists would have seen it, the greed abounding in Roman society had infected its agricultural base. Therefore, to stop the profiteering that he believed was starving the empire, Domitian (died A.D. 96) ordered a halt to all new vineyards and the destruction of half of the existing ones. (The decree was rescinded before its full execution). But Roman policy was inconsistent. Hadrian (died A.D. 138), for example, encouraged the cultivation of olives in Spain, Dalmatia, and Africa by means of his *Lex Manciana*.¹⁹⁷ And, in fact, Spanish olive oil was both better and cheaper than Italian, and popular preference for it contributed greatly to the prosperity of southern and western Spain.¹⁹⁸

In the meantime, the old native habitat of the olive had

undergone serious changes. The massive destruction of the Judean population during the two Jewish wars left now “a motley population of Syrians and Arabs” among the ruins to cultivate “the olive-tree, the vine, and cereals.”¹⁹⁹ Before that time these elements of traditional Syro-Palestinian agriculture had even grown on the Red Sea.²⁰⁰ As after Alexander’s wars some centuries earlier, a number of the veterans of these conflicts settled in Egypt, where they again tried to make the plots like home.²⁰¹ In the Fayyum, this meant olives, for “the soil [there] in most cases was not very suitable for corn [grain] but was excellent for vineyards or olive groves.”²⁰² Thus “a large part of this land was cultivated as vineyards, gardens, and olive-groves.”²⁰³ The soldiers got a tax break, but the Emperors could not afford to diminish their tax levies from Egypt during times of famine; Rome, after all, got its daily bread from Egypt, and the imperial court was dependent upon Egypt for the bread (if not for the circuses) that helped maintain its popular support in the capital. Therefore, the taxes on the rest of the Egyptian population increased. Not surprisingly, the peasants and small landowners bolted, leaving more and more of the burden on fewer and fewer people. The government in its turn responded with policies tying the farmers to the land—policies that, when allowed to run their full course, would produce serfdom in the West and would help to produce an Islamic East, rebellious against Roman regulations (and those of the Byzantine successor-state).²⁰⁴ In the short term, the policies produced new landowners, new vineyards, and new olive groves. But in the third century, Egypt became depopulated and the land went to waste: “Once flourishing vineyards and olive groves ran wild and could not easily be restored to their former fertility.”²⁰⁵

Yet the story of the olive was by no means over. After

the Roman empire imploded, the Arabs took the olive to Persia and eventually to China.²⁰⁶

ECONOMICS

The attention the olive received from ancient governments, some of which we have already noted, clearly illustrates its perceived importance. The great Athenian sage Solon ranked the citizens of Athens according to their revenues in measures of grain, olive oil, and wine. There were *pentekosiommedimnoi* ("500-measure men"), *hippeis*, who had at least three hundred measures, and *zeugitai* with two hundred.²⁰⁷ Among the regulations Solon issued were rules stipulating a minimum distance between plantings of olive trees.²⁰⁸ In Hellenistic Egypt, the oil business was "minutely monitored in every aspect by government officials, as is shown by an extraordinarily detailed set of Revenue Laws promulgated under Ptolemy II Philadelphus."²⁰⁹ Something of the effect of these laws is shown in the preserved correspondence of two officials discussing a woman accused of smuggling oil.²¹⁰ This was a crime unwittingly encouraged by the high tax on olive oil.²¹¹ The Roman emperor Hadrian regulated olive cultivation and the distribution of olive products in detail and issued an enactment in the early second century A.D. directing olive cultivators, dealers, and exporters to keep careful records of production and trade so that a one-third (or sometimes one-eighth) share could be made over to state oil buyers.²¹² Subsequently, due to a revolt in Egypt, the emperor Diocletian cracked down with "a coercive, omnipresent, all-powerful organization"; after A.D. 297, all olive trees had to be registered with the government.²¹³ The tax on olive oil was still in place in the seventh century, when Egypt was under Byzantine rule—but just prior to the Arab conquest.²¹⁴

“Oil-bearing plants” were an important factor in the prosperity—or lack thereof—of cities in the classical Mediterranean world. Indeed, there is a close correspondence between the area of the Mediterranean region where olives could be grown and the area of urbanization.²¹⁵ But such olive-induced prosperity could, in the eyes of prophets and moralists, become a serious temptation (Amos 6:6). Its sheer luxuriousness could lead its addicts into a life of neglect toward God and practical duties. “He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man,” say the Proverbs. “He that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich” (Proverbs 21:17). Thus the Psalmist compares the beguiling words of an enemy to the softness of oil; a seductive woman’s mouth is smoother than oil (Psalms 55:21; Proverbs 5:3). Olive oil is one of the products listed by John the Revelator among the riches of Babylon (Revelation 18:12–13).²¹⁶

By and large, though, olive culture was an innocent and useful way to earn a living. Thales of Miletus, the great pre-Socratic philosopher, is a well-known example. Like his friend Solon, he was one of the seven famous Greek sages and roughly a contemporary of Lehi. But his affinity with Lehi may go even further than mere chronological proximity. Thales may have been of Semitic background himself; certainly his cosmology has Egyptian and Semitic affinities. Herodotus identifies him as being of “Phoenician stock,” which, if true, means that his ancestors came from the area of Tyre and Sidon in modern-day Lebanon. Which is to say that they came from precisely the area that we have already identified as the likely homeland of the olive and, thus, from within a relatively short distance of Lehi’s ancestors.²¹⁷ Thales had taken a great deal of ribbing for his otherworldliness—notoriously, he had fallen into a pit while contemplating the sky—and his poverty, according to his critics,

showed the futility of the philosophy and science to which he was devoted. So he set out to demonstrate that, if he put his mind to getting rich, he could easily do so. Foreseeing by his astronomical skills, while it was yet winter (thus almost a year in advance), that a good year for olives was in the offing, he rented all of the olive mills [*elaiourgeia*] in Chios and Miletus. Then, when a bumper olive crop created a huge demand for the services of olive mills, Thales the philosopher-monopolist made a fortune.²¹⁸ And he was not the only philosopher who is said to have dabbled in the olive business: Plutarch says that the illustrious Plato himself (died 347 B.C.) defrayed his travel expenses by selling oil in Egypt.²¹⁹ For all this, however, olive trees themselves played perhaps a less important role in trade than we might expect, precisely because everybody grew them.²²⁰ (It was for this reason, perhaps, that Solon of Athens banned the export of every fruit from Attica except olive oil. The land, Plutarch relates, was simply too poor to afford a surplus of anything besides olives.)²²¹

Nonetheless, olives and their products continued to be important items of trade. Olive oil was a major part of the annual payment sent by Solomon to Hiram of Tyre at the time he was building his temple (1 Kings 5:11). Later, during the building of the Second Temple, the Jews sent oil to the Sidonians and the Tyrians in exchange for cedar, just as Solomon had done (Ezra 3:7; cf. Ezekiel 27:17). But the fruit of the olive tree was commercially important domestically in Palestine, as well as internationally. The prophet Elisha, for instance, advised a certain widow to sell oil and, thereby, pay off her debts (2 Kings 4:7). And the foolish virgins, lacking oil, were told to replenish their supplies from a dealer (Matthew 25:8–9). The Jews of the first century A.D. were fastidious about the purity of their olive oil, so much

so that when the Jews in Caesarea Philippi were locked away, John of Gischala sought permission to sell them pure olive oil so that they might not have to purchase impure oil from the Greeks, though he did this, Josephus says, “Not out of piety but through blatant greed,” since he sold it to them at a nine hundred percent profit.²²² This same greed is evident in Jewish legal interpretations that exempt them from leaving olives for the poor, while they keep the best olive oil for themselves, being forbidden to export it (Leviticus 19:9–10; Deuteronomy 24:19–22).²²³

In transport, olives were carried in jars (Egyptian *mn, ds*, or *gaja*, Greek *bikoi* or *moia*), the object being to “try to bring them as unbruised as possible,” as one third-century B.C. Hellenistic Egyptian letter from a certain Leodamus admonishes its recipient, Laomedon.²²⁴ Athenian traders in the classical and Hellenistic periods used large pots or plain clay jars (*amphorae*) for the conveyance of liquids such as wine and olive oil.²²⁵

USES OF THE OLIVE

“As today in Mediterranean regions,” writes archaeologist Suzanne Richard, “the olive in antiquity was the fruit par excellence; either the fresh fruit or its oil found a place at every meal.”²²⁶ To the ancient Hebrews, olive oil was one of the necessities of life.²²⁷ Thus, when drought and famine had left the widow of Zarephath with virtually nothing else to eat, she still had “an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse” (1 Kings 17:12, KJV).²²⁸ It was one of the provisions generally laid up in royal storehouses—along with grain and wine—against times of difficulty (2 Kings 20:13, KJV “ointment”; 2 Chronicles 11:11; 32:28; Isaiah 39:2). “There was hardly a phase of life not touched by the olive tree,” Richard continues.²²⁹ Cambridge ancient historian M.

I. Finley agrees: "The ubiquitous olive—the chief source of edible fat, of the best soap and of fuel for illumination—is an essential clue to the Mediterranean life-style."²³⁰

Furthermore, because of the olive's role as a staple of Near Eastern diet, its omnipresence in the biblical landscape (where it clings even to rocky hillsides that defeat many other plants), its long life and consequent venerability, Richard observes, "It is no wonder it assumed an almost mythical character."²³¹ M. I. Finley, for instance, notes of the olive tree that, since it does not bear for the first decade or more of its life, it was in antiquity "a symbol of sedentary existence"—again, its link to urbanization—and "its longevity was celebrated."²³² And this image itself endured well beyond classical times. Edward William Lane cites the Arab grammarian and philologist al-Aṣma'ī (died A.D. 831) to the effect that a single olive tree can live as long as thirty thousand years.²³³ Other classical Islamic scholars knew the olive as "the first tree that grew in the world, and the first tree that grew after the flood."²³⁴ In the biblical parable told by Jotham, when the trees seek to anoint a king from among themselves, it is the olive to whom they first offer the monarchy (Judges 9:8).

The importance of the olive tree, or *zaytūn*, in the Islamic Near East is apparent from the number of words connected with it and preserved in dictionaries of the classical Arabic language. Edward William Lane's *Lexicon*, for instance, knows such verbs—all manifestly related to the noun *zaytūn*—as *zāta* ("to anoint someone"), *zayyata* ("to furnish someone with olive oil"), *azāta* ("to have much olive oil"), *izdāta* ("to anoint oneself with olive oil"), and *istazāta* ("to seek or demand olive oil"). Separate words exist in classical Arabic for those who sell or press olive oil (*zayyāt*), for people who anoint themselves with it (*muzdāt*), and for food

that has been prepared using it (*mazīt* and *mazyūt*).²³⁵ The word *zayt* itself, which originally meant “olive oil” specifically, has now come to signify any kind of oil at all, and, as we have previously noted, has in fact become the most common single term for petroleum—a vitally important liquid of the contemporary Middle East.²³⁶

From earliest times—as in the case of the “freshly-picked olive leaf” brought by Noah’s returning dove—the olive was a symbol of divinely bestowed peace and bounty (Genesis 8:11, NJB). Thus, the *eiresione*, a branch of olive or laurel bound with ribbon and hung with various fruits at harvest festival time in ancient Greece, was clearly connected with the notion of agricultural prosperity.²³⁷ Thus, too, when the Persians burned down the temple of Athena in 480, the people of Athens nonetheless rejoiced to see the sacred olive tree burst into foliage. This demonstrated to them the continuing life of their beloved city.²³⁸

In the biblical world, the olive tree and its fruit were important elements of the promises given to ancient Israel (for example, see Deuteronomy 7:13; 8:8). Accordingly, in the blessing given by Moses to the children of Asher, the prophet asked God to grant certain things to that tribe. “Let him dip his foot in oil,” Moses prayed (Deuteronomy 33:24, KJV). Agricultural and human prosperity was a gift in the power of God to give or to withhold:

Your own labours will yield you a living,
 happy and prosperous will you be.
 Your wife a fruitful vine
 in the inner places of your house.
 Your children round your table
 like shoots of an olive tree. (Psalms 128:2–3, NJB.)

But when Israel failed to recognize the hand of God in granting these gifts, among which olive oil was an impor-

tant item, Israel sinned and was condemned—and the blessings were withdrawn (Hosea 2:8; Deuteronomy 28:51; Joel 1:10; Haggai 1:11). This was what made the suffering of Job so bitter: He had not sinned, but he was nonetheless deprived of the blessings that his righteousness should have brought. He longed for the days “when the Almighty was yet with me, when my children were about me: When I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil” (Job 29:5–6). But Job’s was an anomalous situation, and the general biblical rule was that righteousness brings a plentiful harvest. Abundant stores of olive oil will be one of the glorious marks of the last days (Jeremiah 31:12; Joel 2:19, 24). Indeed, according to the shorter recension of the Slavonic 2 Enoch, an olive tree stands in Paradise next to the tree of life itself, “flowing with oil continually.”²³⁹

In the Qur’an, too, the olive is among the illustrations of God’s generosity to mankind. “He it is who sends down water from heaven,” says the Muslim holy book, which then quotes God as speaking of himself in the first person:

And with it we bring forth plants of every kind. We bring forth from it green herbs, from which we cause heaped-up grains to spring forth. And from the palm tree, from its flower-sheath, we call forth hanging clusters of dates. And [we cause to spring forth] gardens of grapes and olive trees [*zaytūn*] and pomegranates. . . . Look upon their fruit, when they bear fruit, and upon their ripening. Truly, in them there is a sign to people who have faith.²⁴⁰

At one point, in one of Muḥammad’s early revelations, the olive even figures as an element in a divine oath. “By the fig tree and the olive tree [*zaytūn*],” begins the ninety-fifth chapter of the Qur’an. “By Mount Sinai and this secure land!”²⁴¹

Although its native aesthetic endowment is rather limited, the rich and manifold utility of the olive tree gave it a unique beauty in the eyes of pre-modern Mediterranean peoples. Its wood was among the fine materials used to ornament the temple of Solomon (1 Kings 6:23, 31–33). To those who had turned from the paths of righteousness, Jeremiah recalled nostalgically that “ ‘Green olive-tree covered in fine fruit,’ was Yahweh’s name for you” (Jeremiah 11:16). And Hosea’s prophecy of the blessings to be poured out upon repentant Israel once again used the olive tree as a symbol of beauty:

I shall fall like dew on Israel,
 he will bloom like the lily
 and thrust out roots like the cedar of Lebanon;
 he will put out new shoots,
 he will have the beauty of the olive tree
 and the fragrance of Lebanon. (Hosea 14:6–7)

FOOD

Ancient Egyptians consumed olives, but, though they do occur in the later Jewish text known as the Mishnah, there are strangely few references to the use of olives or olive oil as a food in the Bible.²⁴² Still, it can be safely assumed, by analogy to modern practices, that such use was not uncommon. Furthermore, the manna cakes made by the Israelites during their Exodus are said to have tasted like “fresh oil” (Numbers 11:8). In the apocrypha, Judith, en route to the camp of Holofernes, carried a flask of oil among her provisions.²⁴³ Yigael Yadin thinks that the olive pits found in the so-called “Cave of Letters” in the Naḥal Ḥever were the remains of a meal, as they were found with dates, pomegranates, and nuts.²⁴⁴ In the rabbinic period, Jews used olive oil in the preparation of figs.²⁴⁵ The ancient Greek diet included only small amounts of meat (consumed mainly at

the barbecues that accompanied public sacrifices), but relied heavily for its protein content on cheese and on legumes, accompanied by certain other vegetables, by fruits such as figs and grapes, and by wine and olive oil.²⁴⁶

RELIGIOUS RITUAL

Olive oil is referred to in the Hebrew Bible as “the oil of gladness” (Psalms 45:7; Isaiah 61:3; cf. Proverbs 27:9). Well-kept Hebrews, says the book of Ecclesiastes, should always have it on their heads (Ecclesiastes 9:8; cf. Psalm 23:5),²⁴⁷ for oil, say the Psalms, makes the face “shine” (Psalms 104:15).²⁴⁸ Indeed, anointing oneself is a good practice even during a fast, according to the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6:17). It is especially appropriate after a bath and is thus often associated with acts of washing and clothing (2 Samuel 12:20; Ruth 3:3).²⁴⁹ So, too, a guest is highly honored when his host anoints him before a feast (Psalms 23:5; Luke 7:36–50; esp. 7:46). Of course, only olive oil may be used for anointing; other liquids, such as wine or vinegar, are inappropriate for such use.²⁵⁰ In Homeric Greece, as well, newly arrived guests at the house of a great king or lord are washed, anointed with olive oil, and clothed before they sit down to the banquet table.²⁵¹ In pharaonic Egypt and among the biblical Hebrews, this olive oil was often perfumed (Ruth 3:3).²⁵² The Romans thought olives warmed the body and protected it against the cold.²⁵³

Such apparently secular uses shade easily into purely religious ones. As the biblical parable of Jotham puts it, both God and man are honored by means of the olive (Judges 9:9). Its oil played a role in ritual sacrifice under the Mosaic law (see, for example, Exodus 30:22–33), as did olives themselves.²⁵⁴ “Cakes” made with oil were offered to God as part of Mosaic ritual, as were lambs prepared with flour and oil

and accompanied by a drink offering of wine (Leviticus 2:4; Exodus 29:38–41; Numbers 28:3–29:11). (Indeed, the descriptions of these offerings lead one to suspect that they parallel actual cooking recipes of the day.) Both the ancient Hebrew patriarchs and the ancient Greeks ritually poured olive oil over certain stones (cf. Genesis 28:18; 35:14).²⁵⁵ It was used in the ordination of priests and to anoint kings, possibly dedicating them to the Lord just as warriors' shields may have been dedicated (Exodus 30:22–33; Leviticus 8:10–12, 30; 1 Samuel 10:1; 16:1, 13; 1 Kings 5:1; 2 Kings 9:1–3, 6; 11:12; Isaiah 21:5; 2 Samuel 1:21).²⁵⁶ (Other vessels and utensils were also anointed, as was wool.)²⁵⁷ It is, thus, the olive that gives us the title of "Anointed One" (Greek *Christos*; Hebrew *Messiah*), so important in subsequent Jewish and Christian thought (cf. Isaiah 61:1).²⁵⁸

LAMPS

Olive oil as a substance used in lamps is attested in ancient Egypt, where it was mixed with salt.²⁵⁹ (Supposedly, salt prevents the oil from thickening.)²⁶⁰ Among the Hebrews of the Exodus, an eternal flame, presumably an olive oil lamp, was commanded to burn always in the sanctuary (Exodus 27:20; Leviticus 24:2). It is also well known in New Testament times.²⁶¹ One of the many things we can learn from the parable of the wise and foolish virgins is that, since the typical ancient lamp was rather small, prudent people should keep an adequate supply of oil on hand (Matthew 25:1–13). Olive oil continued to serve this function prominently in the Near East for many centuries, as is apparent not only in the famous medieval tale of Aladdin but in the much-beloved "Light Verse" of the Qur'an, which seems to recall the lamps of a Syrian Christian monastery:

God is the light of the heavens and the earth. The similitude of his light is as a niche, wherein is a lamp. The lamp is in a glass, and the glass is, as it were, a shining star. [It is] kindled from a blessed tree, an olive tree [*zaytūna*] of neither east nor west. Its oil [*zayt*] would almost glow forth even if no fire touched it. Light upon light. God guides to his light whomever he wishes. God strikes parables for the people, and God knows all things. [This lamp is found] in houses which God has allowed to be raised up so that his name may be remembered. Therein praise him, morning and evening, men whom neither commerce nor sale distracts from the remembrance of God, and from prayer, and from giving alms.²⁶²

More than one commentator, addressing this verse, could relate that the olive tree had been blessed by seventy different individuals among the Lord's prophets, among them Abraham and Muḥammad.²⁶³ Al-Zamakhsharī explains that the olive tree is called "blessed" (*mubāraka*) because of its "manifold uses" (*kathīrat al-manāfiʿ*).²⁶⁴ Interestingly, al-Zamakhsharī says that the claim that the olive tree referred to in the "Light Verse" is "of neither east nor west" means that it comes from Syria (*al-Shām*), by which he meant the modern area comprising Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine. Further, he reports that the best olive trees are those of that region, and that their oil is the clearest and the purest.²⁶⁵ Another medieval commentator, al-Qurṭubī, thought that the tree's blessedness consisted in its remarkable ability to grow: "The olive is among the greatest of fruits in terms of growth." Its branches, he marvelled, burst into leaf from their tops to their bottoms. But al-Qurṭubī, too, was impressed by the multiple uses to which the olive tree and its products could be put. Not only is it used to light lamps, but it is the fatty substance (*idām*) used to moisten bread. It is used as an ointment (*dihan*) and

in the tanner's trade (*dibāgh*). Indeed, says al-Qurṭubī, there is not a part of the olive in which there is not some use.²⁶⁶

MEDICINAL USAGES

Olive oil was used for medicinal purposes in biblical Israel.²⁶⁷ It was thought to soften wounds, for instance, and was apparently imagined actually to soak deep into the bones when externally applied (Isaiah 1:6; Ezekiel 16:9; Luke 10:34; Psalms 109:18). Such use continued into post-biblical Judaism.²⁶⁸ And the rabbis also noted that olive oil could be used as a lubricant on a weaver's fingers.²⁶⁹ In New Testament times, as is well known, olive oil was used in the ritual anointing of the sick (Mark 6:13; James 5:14). Such applications of the olive to medicine were, of course, far from confined to the Judeo-Christian tradition. Sir James Frazer argued that the story of Leto—which in some versions has her clasping an olive tree as she is about to give birth to the divine twins Apollo and Artemis—points to an ancient Greek belief that certain trees ease the pain of child-bearing.²⁷⁰ The Romans thought it lowered fevers when applied to the head.²⁷¹ The twelfth-century Qur'an commentator al-Zamakhsharī relates a tradition according to which the Prophet Muḥammad described olive oil as a cure for hemorrhoids (*bāsūr*).²⁷²

Given what we have already seen of the centrality of the olive in Mediterranean economics, cuisine, and ritual, such medicinal use should, perhaps, not surprise us. Yet, with the passage of time, it took on an additional, theological, dimension that is worth mentioning. Mircea Eliade has shown how the cross of the crucifixion was assimilated, by many ancient and medieval Christian thinkers, to the tree of good and evil from the garden of Eden. The cross was, indeed, believed to have been made from the wood of that

tree, or from the tree of life, and thus became “the source of the sacraments (symbolized by olive oil, wheat, the grape) and of medicinal herbs.”²⁷³

FRUITS OF RESEARCH

Though we have been concerned in this essay with the economic history and historical background of the olive in the pre-modern Mediterranean, a brief note of *apologia* is perhaps not inappropriate here. Jacob 5 provides a classic example of Blass’s *Übereinstimmen in Kleinen* (verification in minutia).²⁷⁴ It purports to be the work of an ancient northern Israelite author, living between 900–700 B.C., about olive growing.²⁷⁵ Almost every detail it supplies about olive culture can be confirmed in four classical authors whose authority on the subject can be traced back to Syro-Palestine.²⁷⁶ Zenos’s parable fits into the pattern of ancient olive cultivation remarkably well. The placing of the villa above the vineyards²⁷⁷ means that, when the master gives instructions to his servants, they have to “go down” into the vineyard (Jacob 5:15, 29, 38). It was also customary for the master of the vineyard to have several servants (cf. Jacob 5:7, 10–11, 15–16, 20–21, 25–30, 33–35, 38, 41, 48–50, 57, 61–62, 70–72, 75).²⁷⁸ When only one servant is mentioned in Zenos’s parable, the reference is most likely to the chief steward. Likewise, Zenos’s mention of planting (Jacob 5:23–25, 52, 54), pruning (Jacob 5:11, 47, 76; 6:2), grafting (Jacob 5:8, 9–10, 17–18, 30, 34, 52, 54–57, 60, 63–65, 67–68), digging (Jacob 5:4, 27, 63–64), nourishing (Jacob 5:4, 12, 27, 28, 58, 71; 6:2), and dunging (Jacob 5:47, 64, 76), as well as the fact that dunging occurs less frequently in the parable than the nourishing, all mark it as an authentic ancient work. The unexpected change of wild olive branches to

tame ones (Jacob 5:17-18) would have seemed a divine portent to our ancient authorities.²⁷⁹

Even more striking, for Joseph Smith to have made up the parable from these classical authors, he would have had to read all four: Theophrastus is the only one to discuss the differences between wild and tame olives, the tendency for wild olives to predominate, and prophetic use of the olive tree as a sign.²⁸⁰ Varro and Columella are the only ones to acknowledge the Phoenician connections. Cato and Varro are the only ones who discuss the servants' roles. Cato and Columella alone note the placement of the villa above the groves; Varro is the only author to discuss the "main top" in association with the "young and tender branches" (cf. Jacob 5:6). Yet Joseph Smith probably did not have access to these works.²⁸¹ And even if he had, he could not read Latin and Greek in 1829.²⁸² Theophrastus's *Historia Plantarum* was first published in English in 1916,²⁸³ and no part of his *De Causis Plantarum* was available in English until 1927.²⁸⁴ While English translations of Cato, Varro, and Columella were available to the British in 1803, 1800, and 1745 respectively,²⁸⁵ it is hardly likely that they were widely circulated in rural New York and Pennsylvania. Joseph Smith could have known nothing about olives from personal experience, as they do not grow in Vermont and New York. Can it reasonably be supposed that Joseph simply guessed right on so many details? And even if he somehow managed to get the details from classical authors, how did he know to put it into the proper Hebrew narrative form?²⁸⁶

Even if Joseph Smith had somehow gathered the details of ancient olive culture from someone who knew it intimately, he would still have had no plot.²⁸⁷ Just as there is a vast difference between government technical manuals and a Tom Clancy novel, there is a world of difference between

the arid classical agricultural manuals and Zenos's parable. Zenos was not just another olive farmer; he had a tale to tell. Far from a yokel farmer spinning another yarn, Zenos was "a prophet of the Lord" (Jacob 5:2) speaking in the name of the Lord (Jacob 5:3). Parable is the medium and olive culture is merely the particular idiom. A knowledge of the idiom enhances understanding and appreciation of the nuances of the message, but it is not itself the message. As much as a knowledge of ancient olive culture aids in understanding Zenos's parable, ancient olive culture is not the message of the parable. The message is immensely important and "speaketh of things as they really are, and of things as they really will be" (Jacob 4:13); it is not left in the realms of subjective judgment.

While we will leave exegesis to others, we cannot help but notice peculiar details in the story. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that the earliest uses of the olive were generally sacral. Later, when its use was profaned, famines and wars soon followed. Like wickedness, the wild olive is more persistent and long-lived than its tame counterpart. But its fruit is worthless and undesirable. Holiness takes cultivated effort.

Notes

1. See Lucius Junius Moderatus Columella, *Rei Rusticae* V, 8, 1; Judges 9:8–9.

2. We concentrate on the premodern Mediterranean not only because "to ancient readers . . . knowledge and experience did not extend beyond the temperate regions of the Mediterranean" (John Boswell, *The Kindness of Strangers* [New York: Random House, 1988], 12), but also because olives did not extend beyond the temperate regions of the Mediterranean.

3. On the Sumerian terminology, see the equations LAGAB = lagab (PEa 33) = *la-kap-pu* "the LAGAB sign" (PAa 33:1), *up-qum* "block, stump (?)" (PAa 33:2, *up-qu* in Ea I.41); and LAGAB = ni-ge₆-en (PEa 30) = *la-wa-u-um* "to encircle, surround" (PAa 30:1), *sà-*

ha-rum "to turn to" (PAa 30:2, *ša-ha-ru* in Ea I.32), *ša-a-a-rum* "to besiege" (PAa 30:3), *e-ge-e-rum* "to twist" (PAa 30:4), *pa-ha-rum* "to gather" [cf. Egyptian *pḥr*] (PAa 30:5), *ka-lu-u-um* "to retain" (PAa 30:6). See Miguel Civil, *Materials for the Sumerian Lexicon* (hereinafter *MSL*), 17 vols. (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1979), 14:31, 90, 177–78.

4. See Ea I.30b: LAGAB = *gi-ri-im* = *il-lu-ru* "berry" in *MSL* 14:196, but note the curious reading LAGAB = *gi-ri-in* = *el-lu* "pure" in Ea I.30; *MSL* 14:177.

5. Of course, the Romans also referred to the Mediterranean as *mare nostrum*. See HAR-ra-hubullu III.231–37, in *MSL* 5:112 where the classification of *giš.gi-rim* (GIŠ.GI.LAGAB) is first *inbu* "fruit tree" then *illuru* "berry" and finally *sirdu* "olive." Lise Manniche's claim in *An Ancient Egyptian Herbal* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989), 129, that the Sumerian word for "olive" is *giš-ì-giš* is unsupported. For the Sumerians, see *MSL* 14:196; for the Romans, see Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I.41.6.

6. Although the sound shifts involved are not standard and are not enumerated in Sabatino Moscati's *An Introduction to the Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages: Phonology and Morphology* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1980), 27–37, 43–46, they might still be possible.

7. Hans G. Güterbock, "Oil Plants in Hittite Anatolia," in William W. Hallo, ed., *Essays in Memory of E. A. Speiser* (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1968), 66–71. Due to the problems of the Hittite writing system, it is uncertain whether the word was a borrowing, or (more likely) merely a graphic convention hiding a native word.

8. O. R. Gurney, *The Hittites*, 4th ed. (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1990), 66; cf. Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* IV, 4, 1.

9. Gurney, *The Hittites*, 70.

10. The Egyptian *ḏdtw* first appears in the late New Kingdom (Ramesside period); Renate Germer reads it as *ḏt* and identifies it as a Semitic loan word; see Renate Germer, "Olive," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, 7 vols. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1973–90), 4:567; so also Friedrich Junge, "Fremdwörter," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, 2:324; though the Hebrew is misspelled, the mistake is righted in the corrigenda in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, 7:53.

11. The Armenian word is *jet*; see Berthold Laufer, *Sino-Iranica: Chinese Contributions to the History of Civilization in Ancient Iran*, Field Museum of Natural History Publication 201 (Chicago: Field Museum, 1919), 415.

12. For information about the Chinese olive, *gàn-làn* (*Canarium album*), see R. H. Matthews, *Chinese-English Dictionary* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), #847-3, 1168-43, 1506-12, 2309-16, 3230, 3230-1, 3806-2, 3230-2, 3230-3, 3806. This, it should be noted, is not the same as the olive we are interested in, but because of the similar look of the fruits of these two trees, the Chinese today call the olive *gàn-làn*. The European olive (*Olea Europaea*) was brought into China by Persians who brought it from Syria, and it is called *ci-tun*; see Laufer, *Sino-Iranica*, 415-19. The encyclopedic Greek Theophrastus (*Historia Plantarum* IV, 4, 11; cf. Pliny, *Natural History* XII, 14, 26) knows of an Indian variety of the olive (*olea cuspidata*) that is fruitless, but this would seem to be neither the *gàn-làn* nor the *ci-tun*. Thanks to Tina Jenkins for first drawing our attention to this, and to David B. Honey for providing some valuable research material on the subject.

13. See Giuliano and Larissa Bonfante, *The Etruscan Language: An Introduction* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983), 110. The words for both olive oil and the container that held it come from Greek.

14. Matthias Lexers, *Mittelhochdeutsches Taschenwörterbuch*, 37th ed. (Stuttgart: Hirzel, 1986), 155.

15. The Germanic comes via Latin; see Jan de Vries, *Altnordisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Leiden: Brill, 1961), 418; Alexander Jóhannesson, *Isländisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Bern: Francke, 1956), 1103; Geir T. Zoëga, *A Concise Dictionary of Old Icelandic* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1910), 321.

16. For "radish oil" (*elaiou rapha[ninou]*), see Papyrus Antinoopolis 99, line 9, in J. W. B. Barns and H. Zilliacus, *The Antinoopolis Papyri*, 3 vols. (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1960-67), 2:113. For other types of oil, see Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 7, 24-32.

17. M. I. Finley, *The Ancient Economy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 31. In the modern Middle East, too, the olive tree occurs largely in the "Mediterranean" area. Gerald Blake, John Dewdney, and Jonathan Mitchell, *The Cambridge Atlas of the Middle East and North Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 61.

18. Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* I, 3, 1, uses it as one of the principal examples of what it takes for a plant to be considered a tree.

19. Thus D. Kelly Ogden and Jeffrey R. Chadwick, *The Holy Land: A Geographical, Historical and Archaeological Guide to the Land of the Bible* (Jerusalem: n.p., 1990), 50.

20. Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* I, 6, 2-4; V, 5, 2-3.

21. *Ibid.*, I, 8, 6; IV, 14, 3.

22. *Ibid.*, I, 9, 3; I, 10, 2; 4; and 7; I, 13, 1–2.

23. *Ibid.*, I, 11, 3–4; Pliny, *Natural History* XIII, 12, 54; 19, 63; XV, 3, 9.

24. Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* I, 12, 1.

25. Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 7, 9.

26. *Ibid.*, I, 7, 8.

27. Columella, *Rei Rusticae* V, 8, 5; five days' journey from the sea, or three hundred stadia, is Theophrastus' estimation (*Historia Plantarum* IV, 4, 1; VI, 2, 4).

28. These manuals must have been for people who knew absolutely nothing about running a farm and had little to no common sense, for they are quite specific on exactly how to go about running a farm—one cannot help but pity the poor klutz who had to use them. But this is precisely what makes them so valuable to us here.

29. Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 23, 1.

30. Plautus, *Pseudolus* 209–24.

31. Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 1, 10; Columella, *Rei Rusticae* I, 1, 10 (our thanks to John Hall for pointing out this late and decadent Roman source to us); Klotz, "Mago (15)," in *Pauly-Wissowa*, 14:1:506–8.

32. Neither Cato, nor Varro, nor Pliny, nor Columella, nor Theophrastus is listed in the catalogue of books from the Manchester Public Library in Joseph Smith's day; see Robert Paul, "Joseph Smith and the Manchester (New York) Library," *BYU Studies* 22/3 (Summer 1982): 333–56. Of course, this is probably irrelevant because Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon in Harmony, Pennsylvania, three and a half days' journey from Manchester. We take no position, incidentally, on the horticultural accuracy or lack thereof in the classical accounts we are citing; we seek only to reproduce the ancient viewpoint.

33. Columella, *Rei Rusticae* V, 8, 5–7; Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 6, 20–21.

34. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* 10, gives the number as thirteen for 240 *iugera*, broken down as follows: one overseer, one housekeeper, five laborers, three teamsters, one muleteer, one swineherd (optional for Jews, we suppose), and one shepherd. Varro notes the problems with this number (*Rerum Rusticarum* I, 18), and, considering Cato's treatment of slaves (Plutarch, *Marcus Cato* IV, 3–5, 6), a few more might be desired. Jews seem to have hired their workers; Mishnah *Maaserot* 3:3.

35. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* 10. One needed 6 oxen, 4 donkeys, and 100 sheep, used for manure. Here too, Varro finds problems with this number because he says that Saserna says only two yoke of oxen are

needed for 200 *iugera* (Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 19, 1). Pliny includes bees (*Natural History* XI, 8, 18; 16, 46).

36. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* X, 2–5: five olive presses, one covered copper vessel (thirty quadrantal capacity), three iron hooks, three water pots, two funnels, one covered copper vessel (five quadrantal capacity), three hooks, one small bowl, two oil jars, one jar (fifty heminae capacity), three ladles, one water bucket, one basin, one small pot, one ewer, one platter, one chamber vessel, one watering pot, one ladle, one candlestick, one sextarius measure, three large carts, six ploughs and ploughshares, three yokes with straps, six sets of oxen harnesses, one harrow, four manure hampers, three manure baskets, three pack saddles, three pads, tools, eight pitch-forks, eight hoes, four spades, five shovels, two rakes, eight scythes, five straw-hooks, five pruning-hooks, three axes, three wedges, one quern, two tongs, one poker, two braziers, one hundred oil jars, twelve pots, ten grape pulp jars, ten *amurca* jars, ten wine jars, twenty grain jars, one lupine vat, ten large jars, one wash-tub, one bath-tub, two water-basins, covers for jars and pots, one donkey mill, another quern, one Spanish mill, three collars and traces, one small table, two copper disks, two tables, three large benches, one bedroom stool, three stools, four chairs, two arm chairs, one bed, four hammocks, three common beds (eight beds for thirteen slaves? One suspects that Cato's reputation for treating slaves poorly was well deserved), one wooden mortar, one fuller's mortar, one loom, two mortars, four pestles (for beans, grain, seed, kernels) one modius measure (see Matthew 5:15; Columella, *Rei Rusticae* XII, 52, 8, actually thinks three of these are a minimum), one half modius, eight mattresses, eight blankets (for the eight beds), sixteen cushions, ten table cloths, three napkins, six hoods; cf. Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 22, 3. The olive cellar should have oil jars and covers, fourteen oil vats, two large and two small oil flasks, three copper ladles, two oil amphorae, one water-jar, one jar (fifty heminae capacity), one sextarius oil-measure, one pan, two funnels, two sponges, two earthenware pitchers, two half-ampora measures, two wooden ladles, two locks with bars for the cellar, one set of scales, one one-hundred (Roman) pound weight, and other weights; see Cato, *De Agri Cultura* XIII, 2–3. Varro thinks that the reason Cato recommended having so much more equipment than any other author is so that the farmer (Cato) would not have to sell his wine every year; old wine sells better than new (Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 22, 3–4; see also Luke 5:39).

37. Columella, *Rei Rusticae* I, 5, 7; cf. Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* II, 5, 7.

38. Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 2, 6.
39. Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* I, 14, 4.
40. *Ibid.*, I, 4, 1; III, 2, 1.
41. *Ibid.*, IV, 13, 1; IV, 14, 12.
42. *Ibid.*, II, 2, 12. Drastic measures can, however, improve the quality of wild olives from worthless to very poor.
43. *Ibid.*, II, 3, 1.
44. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* VI, 1–2; Columella, *Rei Rusticae* V, 10, 5–6; on the large number of varieties, see Columella, *Rei Rusticae* V, 8, 3–4. Sixty (Roman) feet apart according to Columella, *De Arboribus* XVII, 3; nine (Greek) feet apart according to Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* II, 5, 6. For Jewish measurements see Mishnah *Kilayim* 4:1–9, *Shebiit* 1:2–7.
45. This assumes that the olives are being planted on an incline. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* VI, 2; cf. Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 23. On the low-lying land, see Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* II, 5, 7.
46. Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 30; Cato, *De Agri Cultura* LXI, 2.
47. Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* II, 1, 1–2; V, 9, 8; cf. Pliny *Natural History* XV, 57, 131–32. Mishnah *Orlah* 1:5 probably refers to the olive tree.
48. Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* II, 2, 3.
49. Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 41, 6; Columella, *Rei Rusticae* V, 9, 1–7. This is recalled at Romans 11:17–24 and, of course, in Jacob 5.
50. Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* II, 2, 5.
51. *Ibid.*, V, 2, 4; cf. Pliny, *Natural History* XVI, 56, 128. Mishnah *Shebiit* 1:8 probably refers to olives.
52. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* LI, 133; five to seven years in Jewish reckoning; Mishnah *Shebiit* 1:8.
53. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* XLIII, 1, 45; cf. Columella, *Rei Rusticae* V, 9, 8–11; X, 7. Four feet deep according to Columella, *De Arboribus* 17, 2.
54. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* XLIII, 2.
55. *Ibid.*, 27–28; cf. Columella, *De Arboribus* XVII, 1; Columella explicitly identifies this information as coming from Mago. See also Mishnah *Shebiit* 2:6.
56. Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 47. The Mishnah accords special status to the olives from the crown of the tree, and special efforts were made to keep them from the poor (Mishnah *Peah* 7:2; 8:3).
57. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* XLI, 2; Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 41, 1.
58. Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* II, 5, 3; Cato, *De Agri Cultura* XLI, 2–4; Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 40, 4; XLI, 1–2; Mishnah *Shebiit* 2:4, but see 4:5.
59. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* 42.

60. Columella, *Rei Rusticae* V, 9, 16.

61. According to Mishnah *Kilayim* 1:7, Zenos's mention of grafting wild olives and tame olives may have been illegal, depending on whether the rabbis held that wild and tame olives were different species.

62. Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* II, 7, 2–3; Vergil says the opposite: *Contra non ulla est oleis cultura, neque illae procurvoam exspectant falcem rastosque tenacis, cum semel haeserunt arvis aurasque tulerunt. ipsa satis tellus, cum dentis reluditur unco, sufficit umorem et gravidas, cum vomere, fruges. hoc pinguem et placitam Paci nutritor olivam.* Vergil, *Georgics* II, 420–25; cf. Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 2, 4.

63. Columella, *Rei Rusticae* V, 9, 15.

64. *Ibid.*: *eum qui aret olivetum, rogare fructum; qui stercoret, exorare; qui caedat, cogere.* Cf. Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* IV, 16, 1.

65. Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* I, 14, 1.

66. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* 44; starting early is emphasized, 32; for Jewish law see Mishnah *Shebiit* 2:2–3; 4:10.

67. Columella, *De Arboribus* 17, 3; this sounds a lot like C. S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters* (New York: Macmillan, 1961), 161–70.

68. Mishnah *Shebiit* 4:4.

69. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* 55; cf. Mishnah *Shebiit* 4:1.

70. Pliny, *Natural History* XVI, 76, 206; Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* I, 5, 4–5; VIII, 1–5; III, 6, 2; V, 3, 3; VI, 1; “fig and olive are best to be burned,” though not as kindling (V, 9, 6–7). It also does not rot easily; *ibid.*, V, 4, 2 and 4; Pliny, *Natural History* XVI, 78, 212; 79, 219. It could be used for hammer hafts if it were big enough; Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* V, 7, 8; cf. Pliny, *Natural History* XVI, 84, 230. According to Rabbi Simeon ben Gamaliel, if a married woman acquires an olive tree, it is to be sold as wood; Rabbi Judah forbids their sale because “they are the glory of her father’s house”; Mishnah *Ketuboth* 8:5.

71. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* XL, 1, 27; Columella, *Rei Rusticae* V, 9, 12–13; Jewish provisions in Mishnah *Shebiit* 1:1, 4, 6–7.

72. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* LXI, 1. This might be the best interpretation of Vergil, *Georgics* II, 420–25, cited above.

73. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* LXI, 2; Mishnah *Shebiit* 2:2.

74. Columella, *Rei Rusticae* V, 9, 16.

75. Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 55, 7; cf. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* 93; Columella, *Rei Rusticae* V, 9, 16–17.

76. Columella, *Rei Rusticae* V, 9, 17.

77. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* XXXIX, 1; cf. Mishnah *Shebiit* 3:4.

78. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* 29; cf. Mishnah *Shebiit* 3:2–3.

79. Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 38, 1. This explains the large dove cotes in the ancient world; for a picture, see Hugh Nibley, "Rediscovery of the Apocrypha and the Book of Mormon," in *Temple and Cosmos*, vol. 12 in *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1992), 222.

80. Columella, *Rei Rusticae* V, 9, 14; Androtion, as cited in Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* II, 7, 3.

81. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* 29.

82. Columella, *Rei Rusticae* V, 9, 13; more frequently in Mishnah *Shebiit* 2:2; 3:1.

83. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* III, 2–3; XXXI, 2; Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 2, 5; Colin Renfrew and Malcolm Wagstaff, eds., *An Island Polity: The Archaeology of Exploitation in Melos* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 121. Different varieties were harvested at different times; Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 4, 13–14.

84. Mishnah *Peah* 7:1–2.

85. Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 2, 5–6.

86. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* III, 2–3, 64; Papyrus Hibeh 49, in Bernard P. Grenfell and Arthur S. Hunt, *The Hibeh Papyri*, 2 vols. (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1906), 1:192–93; Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 6, 21.

87. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* 31.

88. Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* I, 14, 2.

89. Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 55, 2–3: *gravior enim plaga medicum quaerit*. See also Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 3, 11–12. One method of dealing with sick trees is given in Cato, *De Agri Cultura* 93.

90. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* 144 and 146 (in each case, complete with ready-made contract). On Jewish practice, see Mishnah *Demai* 6:5, 7; *Maaserot* 3:3.

91. *Arsque vel maior olei musta temperandi: ex eadem quippe oliva differunt suci*. Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 2, 5.

92. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* III, 3–5, 64–65; Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 55, 1 and 6; Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 2, 5.

93. Mishnah *Menahot* 8:4–5.

94. Mishnah *Shebiit* 4:9; *Maaserot* 4:1.

95. Mishnah *Terumot* 1:8–9; *Bikkurim* 1:3.

96. Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 55, 5; Mishnah *Menahot* 8:4. The use of the olive press was prohibited to Jews in the Sabbatical year; Mishnah *Shebiit* 8:6.

97. Columella, *Rei Rusticae* XII, 52, 6–7; Pliny, *Natural History* XII, 60, 130; XV, 3, 9 to 4, 17. Aesop's fable of the lioness and the vixen is implicitly a caustic rebuke of this practice; see Aesop, *Fabula* 167.

98. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* LXVI, 1; cf. Mishnah *Maaserot* 4:1.
99. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* LXVI, 1; Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 6, 22; Jews prohibited placing olive oil into pans or pots; Mishnah *Maaserot* 1:7.
100. Columella, *Rei Rusticae* XII, 52, 13.
101. Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 61 and 64.
102. *Ibid.*, I, 55, 7; cf. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* 93. For pesticidal uses, see Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 8, 33.
103. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* 69; Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 8, 33-34.
104. Mishnah *Maaserot* 5:4.
105. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* 66-68, 145 (complete with contract, once again).
106. That is, by buying or renting all the olive presses and subletting them out as a monopoly. The story will be discussed later. Thales was notoriously intelligent and notoriously uninterested in money.
107. Mishnah *Kilayim* 6:5.
108. Chester G. Starr, *The Economic and Social Growth of Early Greece, 800-500 B.C.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 153-54; cf. Pliny, *Natural History* XII, 60, 130.
109. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* III, 2; cf. Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 22, 4. Cato was notoriously greedy. For Jewish conditions of storage, see Mishnah *Terumot* 8:10.
110. Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 13, 1 and 6-7; Columella, *Rei Rusticae* I, 6, 9 and 18.
111. Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 3, 7.
112. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* 58: *eas condito, parcito, uti quam diutissime durent*. Cato was notoriously stingy. Cf. Mishnah *Maaserot* 3:3.
113. Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 60; on Jewish pickling of olives, see Mishnah *Terumot* 2:6; 10:7.
114. Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 60.
115. *Ibid.*, I, 66; cf. Mishnah *Maaserot* 4:3.
116. Besides the other ways of preparing them mentioned below, Cato gives the following recipe: Remove the pits from any type of olive, chop up the olives and add oil, vinegar, coriander, cummin, fennel, rue and mint, place in an earthenware dish and sprinkle liberally with olive oil (Cato, *De Agri Cultura* 119). Other recipes may be found in Columella, *Rei Rusticae* XII, 49-51.
117. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* I, 117. The suggested ration was one half (Roman) pound of salt to the modius of olives. (You knew there was a reason you had the modius measure among the equipment.) The astute reader will note the similarity between this method of preparing olives and the method of preparing Kalamatia olives.

118. Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 46; cf. Matthew 24:32.

119. Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* I, 10, 1–2; Pliny, *Natural History* XVI, 36, 87–88.

120. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* XL, 1, 44; starting early on the pruning is emphasized, 32; on nourishing with *amurca* in early March, see Columella, *Rei Rusticae* XI, 2, 29; planting in late February and early March; *ibid.*, XI, 2, 42. On the planting, see also Columella, *De Arboribus* 17, 1.

121. This may have been what Vergil intended in *Georgics* II, 420–23; Pliny, *Natural History* XVI, 42, 104.

122. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* V, 8, 27.

123. Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* IV, 14, 8; Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 3, 9–10; XVII, 2, 11.

124. Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* IV, 14, 8–10.

125. Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 3, 9. Of course, because of precession (and latitude differences), this will not work elsewhere or in modern times.

126. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* 144.

127. Columella, *Rei Rusticae* XII, 52, 1–2.

128. Bill Hess first drew this fact to our attention. We have since found an ancient source that says something similar; see Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 4, 15.

129. I. J. Gelb, *Glossary of Old Akkadian*, Materials for the Assyrian Dictionary, No. 3 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 240.

130. Pyramid Text 72 (50), in Alexandre Piankoff, *The Pyramid of Unas* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968), plates 58, 63. The passage is part of the Old Kingdom Opening of the Mouth ritual and had been changed by New Kingdom times; see Eberhard Otto, *Das ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 2 vols., Band 3 of *Ägyptologische Abhandlungen* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1960), 2:22–26; its place seems to be taken by *mdt*. The pyramid text is the first attestation of this oil; it is absent from Peter Kaplony, *Die Inschriften der ägyptischen Frühzeit*, 3 vols., Band 8 of *Ägyptologische Abhandlungen* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1963), 1:301–17.

131. Germer, “Olive,” 567 (though using only late evidence). The equation of *dt*-oil with olive oil is not absolutely beyond question. Doubts about it arise if one insists, with Faulkner, that *dt* simply abbreviates the later *mdt*, “oil,” and if one derives *mdt* from *mdḏ*, “to press, to squeeze.” See Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962), 123–24, 318. This etymology does not seem to be compelling, however. The proposed phonetic shift *d > t* is, it is true, attested in Egyptian, but only

at a much later stage in the language's history than the one in question here. A connection between *dt* and West Semitic *zyt* thus seems a more likely explanation for the Egyptian word—although one could certainly argue that, since the earliest attestation of *zyt* is Ugaritic, and is thus itself somewhat late, the West Semitic word could just as easily have derived from the Egyptian *dt*, rather than vice versa.

132. Or perhaps to the long distance between Mesopotamia and the apparent native lands of the olive. The Pyramid Texts are generally dated to ca. 2500 B.C., during the Fifth Dynasty reign of Unas. Joseph H. Greenberg, "Were There Egyptian Koines?" in Joshua A. Fishman et al., eds. *The Fergusonian Impact: Vol. 1, From Phonology to Society* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1986), 275, places them much earlier.

133. Linear B, the language of the earliest Greek records, dates to about 1450–1200 B.C., nearly 1000 years too late to claim priority. See Michael Ventris and John Chadwick, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek*, 2d ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 28. Our position on the origin of the olive is independently corroborated by Germer, "Olive," 567.

134. Gelb, *Glossary of Old Akkadian*, 240.

135. See CAD, s.v. *sirdu*. Caution must be exercised here and elsewhere, because the use of the term "oil" or even "vegetable oil" in a text does not necessarily indicate the use of specifically *olive* oil. See CAD, s.v. *šamnu*; Herodotus II, 94, 2; Manniche, *Ancient Egyptian Herbal*, 18, 48, 51, 68, 125, 147; Güterbock, "Oil Plants in Hittite Anatolia," 66–71.

136. "I planted all kinds of mountain grape vines, all the fruit trees (known to grow) in human habitations, herbs and olive trees." So Sennacherib; CAD s.v. *sirdu* 1a, *karanu* 2a

137. CAD, s.v. *sirdu* 1a; Herodotus I, 193, 3–4. On the other hand, wine and olive oil are alleged to have been abundantly produced in Persia. See Michael Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1959), 1:83.

138. References to *ì-ḡiš* are legion and readily available from the appropriate lexica and glossaries.

139. Güterbock, "Oil Plants in Hittite Anatolia," 66–71.

140. CAD, s.v. *sirdu*; Cyrus H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1965), 233, 238–39; Charles Virolleaud, *Le Palais Royal d'Ugarit V*, vol. 11 of *Mission de Ras Shamra* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1965), 49, 73; Richard E. Whitaker, *A Concordance of the Ugaritic Literature* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972), 252–53.

141. See Manfred Bietak, "Tell ed-Daba," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, 6:322.

142. See Ingrid Gamer-Wallert, "Baum," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, 1:660; Ingrid Gamer-Wallert, "Cheribakef," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* 1:940; Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 7, 25.

143. Germer, "Olive," 567; Renate Germer, "Öle," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, 4:553; Manniche, *Ancient Egyptian Herbal*, 16–17; Papyrus Anastasi III, col. 2, line 5; Papyrus Rainer 53, lines 9–10, both in Alan H. Gardiner, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies* (Brussels: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 1937), 22, 138; Vivi Täckholm, "Flora," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, 2:270, merely mentions their existence. Hellmut Brunner, "Granatapfel," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, 2:891, attributes the importation of the olive to Thuthmosis III, with the apple, but his citations do not support this.

144. Mishnah *Shebiit* 6:5 may have something to do with this.

145. Germer, "Öle," 553.

146. "*Sie wuchs sicher nicht häufig in Ägypten*"; Germer, "Öle," 553. For an olive-related prayer, see Papyrus Harris I, col. 8, line 5, in Wolja Erichsen's *Papyrus Harris I: Hieroglyphische Transkription* (Brussels: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 1933), 10. See Manniche, *Ancient Egyptian Herbal*, 128–29. The connection between the olive and vine was still strong, as the vines "*rankten sich von Olivenbaum zu Olivenbaum*"; Christine Meyer, "Wein," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* 6:1173.

147. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, 1:274; the reference to Egypt as the gift of the Nile is a paraphrase of Herodotus II, 5.

148. The oasis known as the Fayyum was the one place in Egypt where olives appear to have flourished. On the wine in Egypt, see Meyer, "Wein," 1169–82; Leonard Lesko, *King Tut's Wine Cellar* (Berkeley: Scribe, 1977).

149. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, 1:287, 327.

150. Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* IV, 2, 8–9. Some have argued that it did grow well—see Pascal Vernus, "Wald," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, 6:1144—but the arguments are not persuasive.

151. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, 1:226–27.

152. See Starr, *Economic and Social Growth of Early Greece*, 157.

153. Mishnah *Menahot* 8:3. Other stipulations in *Terumot* 11:10.

154. 1 Kings 6:23, 31–33. Hyrum of Tyre is providing the woodwork. See Stephen D. Ricks, "Olive Culture in the Second Temple Era

and Early Rabbinic Period," in this volume. Mishnah *Shebiit* 9:3 might argue against this.

155. His tribal affiliation, Manasseh, puts Lehi's ancestry in Israel, the northern Hebrew kingdom. Thus, he would have tended to have ties to the area of Phoenicia, or modern Lebanon. That he and his family in fact did have such ties appears likely from a close reading of the Book of Mormon text. It is interesting to note that the Book of Mormon refers often to New World places bearing the name "Sidon," but that the name "Tyre" is nowhere to be found. See Hugh W. Nibley, "The Troubled Orient," in *Lehi in the Deseret/The World of the Jaredites/There Were Jaredites*, vol. 5 in *The Collected Works of Hugh W. Nibley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1988), 23–24; and Hugh W. Nibley, "Dealings with Egypt," and "Politics in Jerusalem," in *An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, vol. 6 in *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley*, 3d ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1988), 88–89, 102. Homer, likewise, knew a great deal about the Phoenicians. Sidon, he was aware, was their leading city; but he never mentions Tyre. (See *Iliad* VI, 288–292; *Odyssey* XIII, 272–86; XIV, 288–97.) And even though Tyre had actually supplanted Sidon as the leading Phoenician city by about 750 B.C., a Phoenician inscription on the island of Cyprus, dating from about 740 B.C., nonetheless refers to a king of Tyre as "king of the Sidonians"; see H. Donner and W. Röllig, *Kanaanäische und Aramäische Inschriften*, 3 vols. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1979), texts 13–16, 31; *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 827. A further tie between the Lehites and the Phoenicians may occur in the fact that the name of the evil "Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians" (1 Kings 16:31, NJB) shows up in "the land of Siron, among the borders of the Lamanites," affixed to a famous harlot (Alma 39:3). "Siron" itself may be the name "Sidon," following a *d>r* soundshift that is, linguistically, not at all unlikely.

156. See Ventris and Chadwick, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek*, 218–21. The common diet was wheat, oil, olives, and figs; *ibid.*, 31.

157. Pindar, *Olympian Odes* III, 6–34.

158. Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* IV, 3, 2.

159. See Richard Duncan-Jones, *Structure and Scale in the Roman Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 33.

160. Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion*, trans. John Raffan (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), 85; Martin P. Nilsson, *A History of Greek Religion*, trans. F. J. Fielden, 2d ed. (New York: Norton, 1964), 27. Sacred trees are also, of course, very well known in the Near East and are often associated with temple sanctuaries. One naturally thinks here of the *ished*-tree of Egyptian Heliopolis, but it is probably

not amiss to think also of Eden's "Tree of Life" and of the multi-branched menorah of the temple at Jerusalem. This is not surprising, since, as Mircea Eliade has written, "The most widespread mythical images of the 'Center of the World' . . . are the Cosmic Mountain and the World Tree." Thus, the temple and the tree are often linked. See Mircea Eliade, *A History of Religious Ideas*, 3 vols., translated by Willard R. Trask (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1978–1985), 3:7.

161. Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 141. This story may suggest that the olive was not native to Greece, or at least to Attica. Herodotus, *Historiae* V, 82, 2 speculates that, in 625 B.C., the olive only grew in Athens. Joseph Fontenrose, *The Delphic Oracle: Its Responses and Operations with a Catalogue of Responses* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 288–89, of course, denies any historicity to this account. Theophrastus knows the myth of the tame olive at Athens; Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* IV, 13, 2.

162. Herodotus, *Historiae* IV, 34, 2; V, 82, 2; VIII, 55; Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 141. In later times, the olive was sacred to Hermes. See *Papyri Graecae Magicae* VIII, 12, in Karl Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1928–41), 46.

163. Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 141.

164. Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 13, 1; Pliny, *Natural History* VIII, 76, 204.

165. Herodotus, *Historiae* VIII, 26, 2; VIII, 124, 2; cf. Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 5, 19. Epimenides beat the Athenians at the game too; see Plutarch, *Solon* XII, 6. For the olive as a symbol of victory, compare also Judith 15:13, in the apocryphal Old Testament, where the victorious heroine and her associates place wreaths of olive leaves on their heads after the death of the oppressor Holofernes. Likewise, olive wreaths were placed on Tutankhamen's coffin. (Manniche, *Ancient Egyptian Herbal*, 27.) Cf. Dieter Jankuhn, "Kranz der Rechtfertigung," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, 3:764. Aeschylus, *Persians* 616–18, places it in Persian funerary practices, though these practices are probably in reality Greek.

166. Lysias's oration, "Before the Areopagus: Defense in the Matter of the Olive-Stump," provides an interesting view of a case from the early fourth century B.C. involving precisely this offense.

167. Ventris and Chadwick, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek*, 129. Most of the tablets "seem to belong to the lists of offerings"; *ibid.*, 218.

168. R. J. Hopper, *Trade and Industry in Classical Greece* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 62; Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, 1:229, 247.

169. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, 1:210.

170. Starr, *Economic and Social Growth of Early Greece*, 154, 156; Hopper, *Trade and Industry in Classical Greece*, 62. The association of olive and vine culture may help to explain the use of the term "vineyard" in Jacob 5. For an example of literal closeness of vine and olive tree in ancient agriculture, see Lysias, "Before the Areopagus: Defence in the Matter of the Olive Stump," 14.

171. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, 1:90.

172. *Ibid.*, 1:93–94, 107. The only exception to the general pattern mentioned by Rostovtzeff (on p. 111)—a rather slight one—is Thrace, which continued to depend upon the Greek heartland for its olives and olive oil, but became essentially self-reliant in wine production. Olives grew well in the Aegean Islands, especially Melos; Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* VIII, 2, 8.

173. Michael Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, 1:123. Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 1, 1, asserts that no olives existed in Italy during the reign of Tarquinius Priscus in the sixth century before Christ, but this is a statement of uncertain value. See Hopper, *Trade and Industry in Classical Greece*, 62.

174. Bonfante and Bonfante, *Etruscan Language*, 110.

175. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, 1:10. See also Hopper, *Trade and Industry in Classical Greece*, 62; Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, 1:123.

176. Hopper, *Trade and Industry in Classical Greece*, 62.

177. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, 1:1–2. For the close connection between business and war, see F. N. Maude, in Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968), 87.

178. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, 1:21, 314. Cato, Plutarch lamented, was an avaricious miser. See Plutarch, *Marcus Cato*, IV, 3–5, 6; IX, 6; XXI, 5–8. He was also xenophobic. See XXII, 2 to XXIII, 4.

179. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, 1:9, 93.

180. *Ibid.*, 22. Though Carthage was utterly destroyed in the Third Punic War, and may have been plowed, it was not sowed with salt (contrary to many, if not all, of the history books of this century); see R. T. Riley, "To Be Taken with a Pinch of Salt: The Destruction of Carthage," *Classical Philology* 81 (1986): 140–46; Susan T. Stevens, "A Legend of the Destruction of Carthage," *Classical Philology* 83 (1988):

39–41; Pasto Visonà, "Passing the Salt: On the Destruction of Carthage Again," *Classical Philology* 83 (1988): 41–42; B. H. Warmington, "The Destruction of Carthage: A *Retractatio*," *Classical Philology* 83 (1988): 308–10.

181. Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* IV, 3, 1. Pliny (*Natural History* XV, 3, 8) denies that Africa can produce even mediocre olives. Nevertheless, not all olives are created equal; Mishnah *Shebiit* 4:10.

182. See Plautus, *Pseudolus* 209–24. For prices later, see Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 1, 2–3.

183. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, 1:21.

184. Caesar, *Gallic War* IV, 2–3.

185. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, 1:30.

186. *Ibid.*, 1:67–69.

187. *Ibid.*, 1:235–37.

188. Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 3, 8.

189. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, 1:239–42. Initially, the Romans had been interested in Dalmatia principally for the rich iron mines there.

190. *Ibid.*, 1:335. On the *sparsio*, see Nibley, "Sparsiones," in *The Ancient State*, vol. 10 in *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1991), 148–94.

191. These olive groves continued to flourish until the fifth century A.D. See Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, 1:344, 692. The reason for the groves' disappearance is unclear, but the arrival on the scene of the Vandals, in A.D. 439, may not be unrelated, though the Vandals picked up olive culture rather quickly (Matho's [Mago's] work was still extant); see Barbara Pischel, *Kulturgeschichte und Volkskunst der Wandeln* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1980), 80–81.

192. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, 1:93.

193. *Ibid.*, 1:201.

194. Alan K. Bowman, *Egypt after the Pharaohs 332 B.C.–A.D. 642* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 37–39; Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, 1:201.

195. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, 1:201.

196. *Ibid.*, 1:201.

197. *Ibid.*, 1:202–3, 368–69.

198. *Ibid.*, 1:213; cf. Mishnah *Shebiit* 4:10.

199. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, 1:271; Yigael Yadin, *Bar-Kokhba: The Rediscovery of the Legendary Hero of the Second Jewish Revolt Against Rome* (New York: Random House, 1971), 17–26; Dio Cassius, *Roman History* LXIX, 12–14.
200. Pliny, *Natural History* XIII, 50, 139.
201. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, 1:281, 2:674–76 n. 49; Bowman, *Egypt after the Pharaohs*, 157.
202. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, 1:281–83; Farouk Gomaà, “Magdola,” in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, 3:1134.
203. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, 1:294.
204. *Ibid.*, 1:294–96.
205. *Ibid.*, 1:480–81. “In the long run,” said Lord Keynes, guru of government policymakers, “we are all dead.”
206. Laufer, *Sino-Iranica*, 415–19.
207. Plutarch, *Solon* XVIII, 1–2; Starr, *Economic and Social Growth of Early Greece*, 49, 154.
208. Plutarch, *Solon* XXIII, 6.
209. Bowman, *Egypt after the Pharaohs*, 56, 94.
210. See Papyrus Hibeh 59, in Grenfell and Hunt, *The Hibeh Papyri*, 1:205.
211. Papyrus Hibeh 112–13, 121, in *ibid.*, 1:296–305, 320–23.
212. Duncan-Jones, *Structure and Scale in the Roman Economy*, 66; Hopper, *Trade and Industry in Classical Greece*, 95. Hopper suspects the existence of parallel regulations going back into pre-Roman times in Greece, possibly to as early a period as the fifth to fourth centuries B.C.
213. A. E. R. Boak, “Early Byzantine Papyri from the Cairo Museum,” *Études de Papyrologie* 2 (1933): 8–11; the quotation is from Joseph A. Tainter, *The Collapse of Complex Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 141.
214. Papyrus Antinoopolis 190, in J. W. B. Barns and H. Zilliacus, *The Antinoopolis Papyri*, 3 vols. (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1960–67), 3:161–65.
215. See the map at Tim Cornell and John Matthews, *The Cultural Atlas of the World: The Roman World* (Alexandria, VA: Stonehenge Press, 1991), 110–11, where this point is explicitly made.
216. This is interesting, particularly because the olive did not flourish in Mesopotamia—yet another indication that “Babylon” here has to mean Rome.
217. Herodotus I, 170, 3.

218. The story is told in Aristotle, *Politics*, I, 11 (1259^a 6–18); Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, I, 26. Plutarch, *Solon* II, 4; III, 5, seems also to refer to Thales's career as an oil merchant.

219. Plutarch, *Solon* II, 4.

220. Finley, *The Ancient Economy*, 132–33, 139. In Europe, on the other hand, where for instance the climatically handicapped north was dependent on the south for its supply, trade in olive oil formed a relatively important aspect of international economics. See Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century*, vol. 3, *The Perspective of the World* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984), 36–38. That the olive was commonplace may be seen in the works of Pliny, most of whose references to olives are simply in comparing other, more exotic plants to the olive for purposes of illustration.

221. Plutarch, *Solon* XXIV, 1. Plutarch explains that, under Solon's legislation, informers against illegal fig-exporters were called "sycophants" (from the Greek *sykon*, "fig"). See also Starr, *Economic and Social Growth of Early Greece*, 175; Hopper, *Trade and Industry in Classical Greece*, 62.

222. Josephus, *Contra Apionem* 74–76. (Thanks to Lyston Barker for drawing this reference to our attention.) Mishnah *Shebiit* 6:5–6 was likely a precedent invoked.

223. See Mishnah *Peah* 7:1–2; 8:3; Mishnah *Shebiit* 6:5.

224. Papyrus Hibeh 49, in Grenfell and Hunt, *The Hibeh Papyri*, 1:192–193; c.f. Wolfgang Helck, "Maße und Gewichte," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, 3:1203–5.

225. Starr, *Economic and Social Growth of Early Greece*, 153; Hopper, *Trade and Industry in Classical Greece*, 97; Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, 1:88.

226. Suzanne Richard, "Olive," in Paul J. Achtemeier, ed., *Harper's Bible Dictionary* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1985), 727.

227. In Mesopotamia, sesame oil seems to have served the purpose generally reserved to olive oil in Palestine. See Ross, "Oil," 3:592. Still, in Revelation 18:12–13, cited above, the Greek word translated by the KJV as "oil" is, specifically, *elaion* ("olive oil").

228. Compare the situation depicted in 2 Kings 4:2.

229. Richard, "Olive," 728.

230. Finley, *The Ancient Economy*, 31. The utility of the olive as a source of edible fat is illustrated by the fact that olive oil continued to be used even in much of early modern Europe (i.e., between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries) as a substitute for butter. See Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century*, vol. 1,

The Structures of Everyday Life: The Limits of the Possible (New York: Harper and Row, 1981), 212.

231. Richard, "Olive," 728.

232. Finley, *The Ancient Economy*, 31.

233. Edward W. Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, [1863] 1984), 1:1274. It is "eternal" (Aeschylus, *Persians* 616–18) and not even the withering hand of age destroys it (Sophocles, *Oedipus at Colonus* 694–705). Similarly exaggerated notions may undergird Shakespeare's optimistic but obscure assertion, in Sonnet 107, that "peace proclaims olives of endless age." Theophrastus is more reasonable: He estimates "about two-hundred years"; Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* IV, 13, 5.

234. Thus [Al-Qurtubī] Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Anṣārī al-Qurtubī, *Al-Jāmi' li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, 8 vols. (Cairo: Dār al-Sha'b, n.d.), 6:4650.

235. See also R. Dozy, *Supplément aux Dictionnaires Arabes*, 2 vols. (Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1968 [1881]), under "zyt," which offers some additional definitions.

236. Since, of course, our own word *oil* is itself related to the word *olive*, this is not altogether unexpected. See Eric Partridge, *Origins: A Short Etymological Dictionary of Modern English* (New York: Greenwich House, 1983), 450.

237. James Frazer, *The New Golden Bough*, abridged by Theodor E. Gaster (New York: Mentor, New American Library, 1964), 114.

238. See, on this, Herodotus, *Historiae* VIII, 55; Philochoros, Fragment 67 cited in Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *De Dinarch* 3, in Felix Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (Leiden: Brill, 1964), III.B.1:118 (= FGrHist 328 F 67); Euripides, *Ion* 1433–36; M. Detienne, "L'olivier, un mythe politico-religieux," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 178 (1970): 5–23.

239. 2 *Enoch* 8:5. The same verse in the longer recension seems to hint at something similar.

240. Qur'an 6:99; cf. 6:141; 16:11; 80:24–32. All translations from the Qur'an are our own.

241. Qur'an 95:1–3.

242. Mishnah *Terumot* 1:9. For Egyptian consumption of olives, see Germer, "Olive," 567; Wolfgang Helck, "Ernährung," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, 1:1269; Manniche, *Ancient Egyptian Herbal*, 129.

243. Judith 10:5.

244. Yadin, *Bar-Kokhba*, 211.

245. Mishnah *Shebiit* 2:5.

246. Starr, *Economic and Social Growth of Early Greece*, 153; cf. Sophocles, *Oedipus at Colonus* 701: *glaukos paidotrophou phyllon elaias*.

247. 2 Samuel 14:2 allows the omission of such anointing at times of mourning; see also Mishnah *Maaser Sheni* 2:1–2.

248. Compare Herodotus III, 23, 2, where olive oil is used to make the skin “glisten.”

249. Ezekiel 16:8–10 furnishes a striking example of this when, in an extended metaphor, God finds “Jerusalem” abandoned and suffering, but covenants with her, washes her with water, anoints her with oil, and dresses her in new clothes. *Second Enoch* 22:8–10 provides an example of this, including also the idea of deification, occurring in the tenth heaven.

250. Mishnah *Shebiit* 8:2.

251. Examples include Telemachus, at the house of Nestor (*Odyssey* III, 464–69), and Telemachus and Peisistratus, visiting the palace of Menelaus and Helen (*Odyssey* IV, 47–51).

252. Manniche, *Ancient Egyptian Herbal*, 48, 50, 129. On page 20, Manniche reports the use of such oil in the process of embalming. The passage cited above from 2 Enoch 22:8–10 also speaks of perfumed oil; see also Pliny, *Natural History* XIII, 1, 3. Perfumed oil could not be eaten by Jews; Mishnah *Terumot* 11:1; cf. *Maaser Sheni* 2:1.

253. Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 5, 19.

254. Mishnah *Terumot* 1:4.

255. See also Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 72.

256. Of course, if these were leather shields, they may have been “anointed” simply to keep them from cracking in the dry Palestinian climate. Jewish law forbids such anointings during a Sabbatical year; see Mishnah *Shebiit* 8:8–9.

257. Mishnah *Demai* 1:3–4.

258. Compare, too, the statements of St. Cyril of Jerusalem (ca. A.D. 313–86) and the roughly contemporary Valentinian compilation called “The Gospel According to Philip,” both of which say that it is by reason of our own “anointing” or “chrism” that we have the right to be called Christians ourselves. (On anointing, see 1 John 2:20, 27.) “Having been counted worthy of this Holy Chrism,” St. Cyril declares (*Catechetical Lecture* 21:5; English translation in Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 7:150), “Ye are called Christians. . . . For before you were deemed worthy of this grace, ye had properly no right to this title.” “Chrism has more authority than baptism,” says “The Gospel According to Philip” 74:12–14; English translation in Bentley Layton, *The Gnostic Scriptures* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1987), 346. “For because of chrism we are

called Christians." It is interesting to reflect that, if these two early Christian sources are correct, the Latter-day Saints, who know an ordinance of "anointing," may qualify as Christians while most of those who deny that Mormons are Christians cannot, since they have no such ordinance.

259. Herodotus, *Historiae* II, 62, 1; Germer, "Olive," 567; Helck, "Ernährung," 1269; Täckholm, "Flora," 273; Henry G. Fischer, "Lampe," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* 3:915, 917; Manniche, *Ancient Egyptian Herbal*, 129; Pierre Montet, *Everyday Life in Egypt in the Days of Ramesses the Great* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), 90.

260. Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 4, 18.

261. Mishnah *Demai* 1:3; *Menahot* 8:4–5.

262. Qur'an 24:35–37.

263. Al-Qurtubī, *Al-Jāmi' li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, 6:4650; [Al-Zamakhsharī] Abū al-Qāsim Jār Allāh Maḥmūd b. 'Umar al-Zamakhsharī al-Khawarizmī, *Al-Kashshāf 'an Ḥaqā'iq al-Tanzīl wa 'Uyūn al-Aqāwīl fī Wujūh al-Ta'wil*. 4 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifa li al-Tibā'a wa al-Nashr, n.d.), 3:67.

264. Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3:67.

265. *Ibid.*, 3:67–68; cf. [Al-Ṭabarī] Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 30 vols. (Dār al-Ma'rifa li al-Tibā'a wa al-Nashr, 1978), 18:110. Other classical commentators emphasize the high quality, the "purity" or the "clarity" [*safw*], of the oil referred to in the "Light Verse." See, for instance, the medieval work of [Ibn Kathīr] 'Imād al-Dīn Abū al-Fidā' Ismā'īl b. Kathīr al-Qurashī al-Dimashqī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm*, 4 vols. (Aleppo: Maktabat al-Irshād al-Islāmī, 1980), 3:290–291; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 18:110–11. Some commentators insist, on the other hand, that the tree alluded to is not of this world. See citations at al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 18:110.

266. Al-Qurtubī, *Al-Jāmi' li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, 6:4650.

267. It may have been similarly used in ancient Egypt, but the evidence is somewhat ambiguous. See Manniche, *Ancient Egyptian Herbal*, 78, 125, 129.

268. *Babylonian Talmud*, *Shabbat* 134a.

269. Mishnah *Demai* 1:4.

270. Frazer, *The New Golden Bough*, 116. See Manniche, *Ancient Egyptian Herbal*, 78, for the presence of olive oil in a pharaonic Egyptian medical compound used to treat disorders of the womb.

271. Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 5, 19: *eiden fervores capitis refrigerare*.

272. Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3:67.

273. See Eliade, *A History of Religious Ideas*, 2:401–3.

274. Friedrich Blass, “Hermeneutik und Kritik,” in *Einleitende und Hilfsdisziplinen*, vol. I of *Handbuch der klassischen Altertums-Wissenschaft* (Nördlingen: Beck, 1886), 271–72.

275. Zenos can be dated from two criteria. First, the mention of “those who are at Jerusalem” (1 Nephi 19:13) means that Zenos had to have lived after David took the city. (The text of 1 Nephi 19:11–17 forms a single flowing context and can all be attributed to Zenos, as can also the nameless “prophet” of 1 Nephi 22:17–18, 23–25; it would seem that many of the sayings attributed simply to “the prophet” refer to Zenos and not Isaiah). Second, because Zenos is a northern prophet, he would have prophesied before the captivity of the northern kingdom, which would indicate why his record is not in the Bible, as only the works of southern prophets are included therein.

276. We omit Pliny, since he supplies few details significant for our purpose.

277. Columella, *Rei Rusticae* I, 5, 7.

278. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* 10; Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum* I, 18.

279. Theophrastus, *Historia Plantarum* II, 3, 1.

280. Romans 11:16–24 does mention wild and tame and grafting, but nothing about the fruit or the purposes thereof. A casual reading of Paul leaves the impression that it is as easy to be one way as the other.

281. See Paul, “Joseph Smith and the Manchester (New York) Library,” 333–56.

282. We know that Joseph Smith studied Greek in December 1835, yet even then it was not as high a priority as Hebrew—to our knowledge the first mention of studying the language is 23 December 1835, and he could not have gotten very far before he got his dictionary on 20 November 1835—see Dean C. Jessee, ed. and comp., *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984), 91, 117; Dean C. Jessee, ed., *The Papers of Joseph Smith*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989–92), 1:144, 177; 2:87, 120. To our knowledge, Joseph Smith’s first citation of either Greek or Latin occurs on 6 September 1842, at D&C 128:8, 11; for later references, see also Joseph Fielding Smith, comp., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1972), 300; DHC 6:75, 90. In fact, his mother, Lucy Mack Smith, said of Joseph at this time that he was “a boy, eighteen years of age, who had never read the Bible through in his life: He seemed much less inclined to the perusal of books than any of the rest of our children, but far more given to meditation and deep study.” Lucy Smith, *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet*

and his Progenitors (Lamoni, IO: Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 1912), 2. Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1979], 82).

283. Theophrastus, *Enquiry into Plants*, trans. Arthur Hort (London: Heinemann, 1916).

284. Robert E. Dengler, *Theophrastus: De Causis Plantarum Book One: Text, Critical Apparatus, Translation and Commentary*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1927. The first full translation is Benedict Einarson and George K. K. Link: *Theophrastus, De Causis Plantarum*, 3 vols. (London: Heinemann, 1976–90).

285. Thomas Owen, *M. Porcius Cato concerning Agriculture* (London: White, 1803); Thomas Owen, *Varro, Three Books concerning Agriculture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1800); M. C. L. Curtius, *Iunius Moderatus Columella of Husbandry, in Twelve Books and His Book Concerning Trees* (London: Millar, 1745).

286. The narrative of Zenos follows the Hebrew narrative pattern as laid down by Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981).

287. Zenos's plot is much more complicated than Paul's, and if Joseph Smith is adding to the plot, it must be explained how he got the extra details (e.g., discussions with the servants, the multiple branches and trees, the plots of land) and made them fit in with ancient olive lore.

10

The Olive in Greco-Roman Religion

John Franklin Hall

In an offering of papers overwhelmingly directed toward concerns of the ancient Near East and Israelite religion, whether of the Old World or New, this paper stands in contrast and was invited in order to provide, largely for the sake of comparison of the Greco-Roman world with the ancient Near East, information concerning the role of the olive in the religion and ceremonial of those gods whose cults flourished among Greeks, Romans, or both. Although the Hellenistic kingdoms of Alexander and his successors encompassed much of the Near East during the third century B.C. and Rome's expansive dominion soon followed in holding sway over these same areas for more than seven centuries, this topic will remain limited to aspects of the olive in Greece and in Italy proper and not endeavor to encompass the vast and diverse regions subject either to Greco-Roman civilization or to Roman governance.

Extending beyond the aforementioned considerations of comparative religion, information about the olive in Roman culture seems especially pertinent in relation to any consideration of Paul's well-known allegory in Romans 11. While it is, of course, common knowledge that the Epistle to the Romans was not so much directed to the general citizenry of Rome as it was towards the early Christian community residing at Rome, which probably would have included few

actual Romans, nevertheless it is not unimportant to consider the experience of the Romans in regard to the olive, both in religion and otherwise.¹

By the first century A.D. the olive was omnipresent in Italy as well as in the western Mediterranean provinces of the Empire. The introduction of olive cultivation in Spain, the greatest producer of olive products in the modern era, is, for example, attributed to the Romans and dates from this era.² Writers of the Imperial period are consistent in their testimony of the extent of olive culture throughout Italy. *Res rusticae*, a genre of works devoted to discussion of the agrarian enterprise and lifestyle, were popular among the Romans. Detailed instruction about crop raising, vineyard culture, and herd or flock production comprised much of the sort of fairly accurate material found in these practical guidebooks.³ From the last century B.C. and the first century A.D., the agricultural works first of Varro and later of Columella, both entitled *De Re Rustica*, abound with references to the olive and its cultivation. Varro makes frequent mention of olive culture,⁴ while Columella, the most detailed of the ancient horticulturalists, reviewed all varieties of olives, with diverse planting, pruning, and harvesting information for each. Also provided are carefully crafted directions about the production of oil and the comparative value, uses, and shelf life of oil from different olive varieties.⁵ In a more scientific than practical vein is Pliny's *Natural History* from the same period. His narrative about olives ranges from the sort of practical agricultural material reviewed above, to minutia of a scientific sort or simply coincidental information about the significance of the olive in the life and culture of the time. Much of what religious information exists regarding the olive derives from Pliny.⁶ This extensive familiarity with the olive was not new for

Romans of the Imperial era. Three centuries earlier the great Roman statesman and noted advocate of the simple rustic life as the best builder of character had compiled considerable instructional material on olive production for readers of his time. Cato's *De Agricultura* is not only one of the major agricultural treatises of antiquity but a guide for the pristine life afforded to those engaged in such enterprise.⁷

Not only was olive culture practiced very extensively in Italy from at least as early as the third century B.C., but, more significantly, the olive seems to have flourished far better in Italy with its milder climate and more fertile soils than it had in the Near East. The olive and its products were everywhere, commonly available at affordable prices. For this reason, the olive may have been considered in Italy perhaps not as valuable as it would have been in the eastern provinces during Roman times or among ancient Near Eastern peoples of an earlier era. Moreover, the value attached to the olive or its highly prized oil may well have influenced its significance in the religious ritual of an area or people.⁸

Greece, even more than Italy, has been popularly associated with the olive in both ancient and modern times. The olive could grow profitably in its poor rocky soil. While its volume of production might not have approached that of Italy during Roman times, olive cultivation was extensive in classical Greece.⁹ Greek literature is far less discursive than Roman literature, at least in a direct or topical fashion, on the subject of olive cultivation. There are no ancient Greek treatises on agriculture or natural science that, if they existed, could supply information about the Greek olive industry. However, that olives were widely cultivated is attested not only by their frequent coincidental mention throughout the corpus of Greek literature but also by exam-

ination of the trade practices of the Greeks as recorded in written historical sources and tangible archaeological remains. Indeed, the Greeks were the first people to produce the olive on a large commercial scale. The export of both olives and olive oil formed the basis of the primary commercial enterprise of Greece from the eighth through third centuries B.C. Olive oil was traded as far away as Sicily or the regions north of the Black Sea for the grain that Greece could not produce in sufficient abundance to support her population. Colonization followed trade and Greek colonies in the East and West carried with them olive cultivation. The commercial empires of Corinth and Athens were raised on the profit of the olive oil trade. The Greek vases, white figure, black figure, or red figure, so much admired and studied in art history and humanities courses, were produced as simple containers for the export of the olive's oil, golden in more than one way.¹⁰

The Greeks believed themselves to have been the discoverers if not of the olive itself, then certainly of olive cultivation. Tradition attributes this discovery either to one Aristaeus, a son of Apollo, described variously as the discoverer of the olive or the inventor of olive oil, or else to Athena herself, goddess of the arts of civilization that would clearly encompass the cultivation of the olive.¹¹ Modern scientific opinion may sanction the claim of the ancient Greeks, since the earliest known locale of olive cultivation is now said to have been the island of Crete as early as 3500 B.C.¹² Accordingly, it is in Crete where our search for the use of the olive in Greco-Roman religion must begin.

It is essential to remember that Greek religion and Roman religion are not the same. While it may perhaps be appropriate to speak of Greco-Roman religion in late antiquity after centuries of syncretistic borrowings and associa-



The Athenian dominance of the olive-oil market was symbolized by the myth of the contest of gifts between Poseidon and Athena to become the patron of a new city. Its founder, the serpent-bodied Cecrops, judged her gift of the first olive tree, planted on the Acropolis, to be superior, and the city was named Athens. In this scene from a fifth-century B.C. red-figure vase, Athena pours out a libation before the olive tree while a white-bearded Cecrops holds a sacrificial lamb and drink offering in honor of Erecthonios, hidden in the covered basket with saplings around it. A winged victory hovers above, holding an olive branch and jug.

tions had accomplished a homogenization of cult in the late antique world, to make such a categorization at any other period is to oversimplify vastly and erroneously.¹³ Greeks and Romans may in large part derive from kindred peoples of Indo-European origin who may be presumed to have

shared certain similarities of religion and society when they migrated to Mediterranean regions from the cultural morass, which must have existed in the plains of central and eastern Europe at the end of the third millennium B.C.¹⁴ Italic religion remained seemingly little changed as the sky-gods of Indo-European lore continued to exercise sovereignty over Italic peoples. Etruscan religious influences were of later date and preponderant only in matters of state rather than private cult and only in cities where Etruscan rule ordered and standardized religious practice. Of course, of all Italic settlements Rome was most heavily influenced by the Etruscans.¹⁵

By contrast, the religion of the nomadic tribes who became settled and civilized as they inhabited Greece was subjected to the immediate influence of the more highly advanced civilization of the Minoans. The impact not only of Minoan culture but most particularly of Minoan religion was decisive. In numerous books and articles on the subject, Martin Nilsson has demonstrated how extensively Greek religion was reworked. Minoan divinities were transferred into the Greek pantheon, and cultic practices were adapted to Greek religion.¹⁶ The strongly matriarchal bent of Minoan worship contributed major goddesses to the Greek system. From the old Minoan fertility mother goddess was derived no less important figures than Hera, Artemis, and Aphrodite. Even Athena, often held along with Apollo to be most representative of the spirit of classical Greece, was ironically a Minoan tutelary goddess dedicated to the protection of royal families and their palace citadels.¹⁷ Incidentally, even so great and important a god as Apollo was not originally Hellenic either. His worship derives from the early peoples of Anatolia where his great cultic centers were located. At Greek sites such as Delphi he displaced

earlier divinities once worshipped by Minoans or Mycenaean Greeks.¹⁸

Three gods of classical Greece are variously associated with the olive—most often Athena but also Zeus and Apollo. Zeus's connection may derive from the abundant wild olive trees (oleaster) that surrounded his sacred precinct at Olympia. Frequent reference is made in the ancient sources to victors at the Olympic games, held at Olympia, being crowned with the wild olive, as was also the great statue of Zeus in his nearby Olympian sanctuary. A Zeus worshipped on Crete was called Zeus Elaious, the olive Zeus, perhaps from the fact that his original cult statue was carved from olive wood.¹⁹ Apollo, whose mother Leto gave birth to the god under a palm and an olive tree, was said to have imported a species of grey olive, and the role of his offspring Aristaeus in discovering olive oil has been noted above.²⁰

It is, of course, Athena who was most connected with the olive and Athena alone with whom was linked the domesticated olive (the *elaies* in Greek, the *olea* in Latin). If indeed the olive had been first domesticated on Crete of the Minoans, it is fitting that it be associated with a goddess of Cretan origin. That the olive might figure in the cult of Athena is consistent with a characteristic feature of Minoan religion, namely the sacred character and worship of trees. The earliest artistic depictions of Athena that are found in paintings of the Mycenaean era, represent the goddess seated beneath or standing beside an olive tree. Upon these the goddess is identified by her appellation of Athena. Earlier Minoan depictions of the guardian goddess of the fortress palace use much the same iconography but fail to make a name identification. Athena is very precisely the tutelary goddess of the old Mycenaean palace on the

Acropolis. From Athens her worship spread throughout Greece, and other cities with differently named versions of Athena's Minoan predecessor quickly assimilated the local deities to Athena.²¹

At Athens Athena seems in her earliest stage to have been worshipped as the rocky mound of the Acropolis itself, a mountain mother goddess of the usual Cretan-Anatolian sort. With her were linked the objects associated with her rock: the snake, the owl, and the olive trees that covered it.²² Later, Athena seems to have been thought of as one particular olive tree, located in the inner courtyard of the fortress palace that Mycenaean princes constructed on the mound.²³ After the palace was gone, a sanctuary named for the famous Athenian ruler of Mycenaean times, Erechtheus, housed that same olive, no longer viewed as the goddess herself, but as a tree sacred to her. Later, legend associated the Erechtheum with the tale of the competition between Athena and Poseidon for the position of patron god of the Athenians. In it were Athena's gift to the Athenians, the domesticated olive, and the salt pool, the remnant of the waters brought by the sea god to kill the olive.²⁴ Athena was believed to have bestowed many of the arts of civilization upon her people, but no gift was considered greater than her domesticated olive. At the principal religious festival of Athena and the Athenians, the Great Panathenaea, victors were rewarded with oil pressed from olives from groves on the Acropolis and elsewhere, which were sacred and were held to belong to the goddess.²⁵

In 480 B.C. Athens was abandoned to the onrushing Persian horde and the Athenians took refuge southward or in their strong wall of ships. After the Athenian fleet destroyed Xerxes' fleet, forcing a strategic retreat of Persian land forces, Athenians returned to the smoking ruin of their

city. Athena's sacred olive, by then believed to be the oldest tree in the world, was found destroyed. In his history of the Persian wars, Herodotus reports that the Athenians took heart when in a few days a new shoot sprang forth from the stump of the tree. It was said that the tree was a representation of the people of Athens, and that as it had reestablished life, so would the Athenians reestablish their lives and that of their city.²⁶ Here is a striking real life parallel to the scriptural allegories of the olive tree. For the Athenians the sacred tree of Athena was the sacred symbolic tree of their race.

To return now to the starting point of this paper—Rome—we move ahead several centuries and find olive culture at its height in Italy. Roman literature of the late republic and early empire is replete with references to the olive and its sacred and symbolic associations with Minerva, an Etrusco-Italian goddess of crafts and craftsmen, long since molded under the influence of Greek syncretism and literature to a Roman copy of the Greek Athena. Of course, the Minerva who appears in the pages of the poets is really only Athena with a Roman name, and all allusions to the olive fit the Athenian connections already discussed.²⁷

Historical and antiquarian writings of an earlier date that investigate the origin of Roman cult are uniform in their omission of any connection of the pre-syncretic Minerva with olives, and so forth. All later references to Minerva and the olive are in reality allusions to Athena, by that time Minerva's Greek counterpart. In fact, only two connections of any kind can be made with any aspect of Roman cult.

One of the most ancient cults at Rome was that of old Saturn, an Etruscanized fertility god of Italic origins who presided over pastures and fields. Several evidences indi-

cate that his cult statue, made of ivory, was actually hollow and filled with olive oil, replenished several times a year. Alas, hidden here is no secret ritual of oil in Saturn's worship or that of any cult at Rome. Rather, the pragmatic Romans, with so great abundance of olive oil that it was used by rich and poor as a cosmetic panacea, had discovered its preservative powers. Saturn's statue had begun to deteriorate, and the Romans sought to preserve it by filling it with oil.²⁸ In Italy we find no sacred groves of olive and only one ritualistic use of the olive bough. Both Festus in his recounting of the religious practices at Rome, and Servius in his lengthy and detailed scholarly commentary on Vergil's *Aeneid*, reveal that the Flamen Dialis, priest of Jupiter and the oldest and most venerable of Rome's major priestly offices, wore a ceremonial cap, the *pilleum*, made from the leather of a white bull sacrificed to Jupiter and upon whose horns were tied olive boughs. No further comment is made or information supplied. The purpose of the ritual, the symbolism of the olive, and its connection to Jupiter are unknown.²⁹ Only that the practice is extremely archaic, predating any Greek syncretic tendencies, can be considered certain. Here, then, is the sole connection of the olive to Roman religion proper, as evidenced by any remaining sources—literary, historical, or archaeological.

What then can be made of this almost complete absence of any religious connection of the olive to the religion of Rome, in whose native Italy the olive was so omnipresent? What comparison can be made to Greek religion or other cultures where some associations of the olive in ancient cult, particularly that of Athena, are found? Several tentative hypotheses may be ventured.

The olive was less important in Rome than in Greece and the Near East probably because the olive had become

so common and was found virtually everywhere. Its value in Rome was, therefore, less than in lands further east, for scarce objects are usually of greater value. Moreover, the olive was not part of Indo-European religion. Its almost complete absence in ancient Italic cult corroborates its religious insignificance there. When they entered their respective areas of the Mediterranean, Greeks and the Italic ancestors of the Romans shared common cults of Indo-European religion. The olive would have played as little a role in Greek religion as it did in Roman, except for the extensive borrowings from the Minoan cult where female divinities, connected with trees and the arts of civilization, were adopted by various cities and peoples of the Greeks. Accordingly, to modern scientific views that the olive was first domesticated in Minoan Crete can now be added substantiating evidence from Minoan religion, including the extensive role of the olive in the cult of Athena, a goddess of Minoan origin. Clearly, the origin of the olive in Greco-Roman religion must be traced to Minoan Crete and quite possibly, so too the origin of that domesticated variety of the olive so important in the life and literature of the ancient Mediterranean world.

Notes

1. Richard Lloyd Anderson, *Understanding Paul* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 168–95. Professor Anderson is accurate in his description of a cosmopolitan Rome with large population groups of non-Italians, and in his assessment of church membership at Rome in the early apostolic era as being largely composed of Jewish, Greek, and Hellenistic Greek converts.

2. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 15th ed., s.v. "olive." Also see F. M. Heichelheim, "Olive Culture," in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 2d ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984), 749–50, and Tenney Frank, *Economic Survey of Ancient Rome*, 6 vols. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1940), 3:132, 140, 218.

3. The best summary treatment of *res rusticae* is K. D. White,

"Roman Agricultural Writers," *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1973), 1:4:439–97. Also see Michael Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, 2d. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957), 9–10, 19, 63, 314, 574; Peter Garnsey and Richard Saller, *The Roman Empire: Economy, Society, and Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 45–46; Frank, *Economic Survey of Ancient Rome*, 1:69, 100, 126, 158–75; 5:204–5, 221.

4. Varro, *De Re Rustica* I, 2, 7, 13, 22–24, 40–42, 46–47, 54–57, 60–62.

5. Columella, *De Re Rustica* I, 6, 1 and 8; V, 8, 1 to 9, 16; XII, 49, 1 to 52, 22; *De Arboribus* XVII, 1–4.

6. Pliny, *Natural History* XV, 1–32.

7. Cato, *De Agri Cultura* I, 64–69, 144. Also see Alan E. Astin, *Cato the Censor* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 182–206.

8. Frank, *Economic Survey of Ancient Rome*, 1:170–77, 193, 200, 205, 284; 5:153–56, 221.

9. Frank, *Economic Survey of Ancient Rome*, 4:475, 477 and n. 7, 484; Peter V. Jones, *The World of Athens: An Introduction to Classical Athenian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 66–71.

10. Jones, *The World of Athens*, 180–82; John B. Bury and Russell Meiggs, *A History of Greece*, 4th ed. (New York: St. Martins, 1983), 68–88.

11. Vergil, *Georgics* II, 420; Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* III, 45; and *In Verrem* IV, 128.

12. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 15th ed., s.v. "olive."

13. Several basic studies on Greek and Roman religion, their differences and similarities, are H. J. Rose, *Religion in Greece and Rome* (New York: Harper & Row, 1959); Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985); Nicola Turchi, *La religione di Roma antica* (Bologna: Capelli Editore, 1939).

14. On the question of the Indo-European origins of the Greeks, and with some attention to the Romans as well, a good recent treatment is Robert Drews, *The Coming of the Greeks* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 3–45 and 158–202.

15. The standard authority for Etruscan Religion is Ambros J. Pfiffig, *Religio Etrusca* (Graz: Akademische Druck und Verlagsanstalt, 1975). For Etruscan influences on Roman religion, see Albert Grenier, *Les religions Etrusque et Romaine* (Paris: Presses universitaires, 1948); Massimo Pallottino, *The Etruscans* (New York: Penguin, 1975 repr.); Robert M. Ogilvie, *Early Rome and the Etruscans* (Glasgow: Collins, 1976). Also see H. J. Rose, "On the Relations between Etruscan and

Roman Religion," *Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni* 4 (1928): 161-77.

16. Martin P. Nilsson, *The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion and Its Survival in Greek Religion*, 2d ed. (Lund: Gleerup, 1950); *A History of Greek Religion*, 2d ed. (New York: Norton, 1964); *Greek Piety* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1948).

17. Nilsson, *History of Greek Religion*, 23-30; *Minoan-Mycenaean Religion*, 417-20; W. K. C. Guthrie, *The Greeks and Their Gods* (Boston: Beacon, 1954), 106-9.

18. Guthrie, *The Greeks and Their Gods*, 183-204; Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 143-49.

19. Pliny, *Natural History* XVI, 240; Pindar, *Olympian Odes* III, 16-34, 42; Herodotus, IV, 34; Pausanias, V, 7, 7; V, 10, 1; Also see Arthur S. Pease, "Oelbaum," *Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* (Stuttgart: Metzlerische Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1937), 17.2:2018-19.

20. Strabo, XIV, 120; Tacitus, *Annals* III, 61; Ovid, *Metamorphoses* VI, 335; XIII, 634; cf. also n. 11.

21. Guthrie, *The Greeks and Their Gods*, 106-9; Nilsson, *History of Greek Religion*, 26-27, *Minoan-Mycenaean Religion*, 417-19; Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 139-43.

22. Guthrie, *The Greeks and Their Gods*, 107, follows Arthur B. Cook, *Zeus: A Study in Ancient Religion*, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1914-40), 3:224-25, in arguing that the rock of the Acropolis at Athens was the original "Athene" and that the goddess developed as the deity of the site, taking its name. Later associations with the Mycenaean tree cult, snake goddess, and protecting goddess of the palace and its rulers were attached to the "pre-Greek mountain mother of the Acropolis rock."

23. Cook, followed by Guthrie, *The Greeks and Their Gods*, 107, argues that Athena's connection with the olive derived from its presence on the acropolitan rock of which Athena was the divine personification. In contrast, Jane Harrison, in "Some Points in Dr. Furwaengler's Theories on the Parthenon and Its Marbles," *Classical Review* 9 (1885): 85-92, argues that Athena, as Athena Aglauros, functions specifically as an olive goddess. The connection, according to Harrison, arose because the goddess Athena's first cult statue was made of olive wood. From the olive wood statue, which was in a certain sense considered the person of Athena, came the association of Athena as being the sacred olive tree of Athens itself. The early belief that Athena was the olive is reflected in the goddess's later iconography on Athenian coinage as emerging from the trunk of an olive. The

identification of Athena as the tree perhaps dates to the era of Minoan influence and reflects the widespread tree cult of Minoan religion. On the latter point see Guthrie, *The Greeks and Their Gods*, 106, and Nilsson, *History of Greek Religion*, 26–27.

24. The elder Pliny, *Natural History* XVI, 240, reports that the sacred olive of Athena still stood upon the Acropolis in his day and was considered by many to be the oldest tree in the world. Plutarch claims that the particular tree dated to at least as early as the reign of the quasi-mythical king Theseus (*Theseus* 18). Legend holds that this was the first olive tree, created by Athena as her gift to mankind, by striking the ground of the Acropolis with the point of her spear (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* VI, 80; Vergil, *Georgics* I, 18). The tree is frequently associated with Athena in iconographical and artistic depiction (Pausanias I, 24, 3–5). The competition between Athena and Poseidon to become patron deity of the Athenians resulted in Poseidon's attack on Athena's olive with a saltwater pool. Harrison, "Some Points in Dr. Furwaengler's Theories," 92, suggests that the attack was made not simply on the tree but on the person of Athena, embodied in the tree. Herodotus, VIII, 55, recounts the competition and Athena's triumph with the assistance of Cecrops, the Minoan-Mycenaean legendary founder of Athens. His son Erechtheus constructed a great palace on the Acropolis of which Athena was guardian in her guise as the Minoan protectoress goddess of princes and palaces (Guthrie, *The Greeks and Their Gods*, 107). The palace housed both Athena's sacred olive and her protecting serpent. On the same site was later constructed the Erechtheum, named for Erechtheus. In historical times this was the site of Athena's olive (Pausanias I, 26, 5 to I, 27, 2). From these associations can be adduced additional evidence for Athena's Minoan-Mycenaean origin at Athens.

25. Plutarch, *Theseus* 22; Aristotle, *Athenaion Politeia* LX, 2.

26. The incident is recounted by numerous sources, most complete of which are Herodotus, VIII, 55; Dionysus of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities* XIV, 2; Pausanias, *Description of Greece* I, 27, 2.

27. On questions of syncretism of Greek religion and mythology into the Roman system in general, see n. 13.

28. Pliny, *Natural History* XVI, 240.

29. Festus, *De Significatione Verbum* 10 (M), s.v. *albogalerus*; Servius, *In Vergilium Commentarius* I, 270; II, 683. Also see Arthur S. Pease, "Oelbaum," *Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, 17:2:2017.

11

Ritual Anointing with Olive Oil in Ancient Israelite Religion

Donald W. Parry

Ancient Israelite religion possessed a significant collection of rituals, as attested in the Hebrew Bible. One ritual, which was intimately connected to the Israelite temple system, consisted of the use of olive oil accompanied with a ritual gesture called an anointing. The ritual anointing played a vital role in temple theology. Two principal questions regarding ritual anointings will be answered: What persons and what objects were anointed with olive oil, and what was the religious symbolism of the anointing?

THE RITUAL ANOINTING OF OBJECTS AND THINGS

We do not know very much concerning the anointing of objects and things before the Mosaic period of Israelite history. The anointing of the pillar by Jacob is an exception. The book of Genesis makes it clear that Jacob was in a temple-like setting. It was at Bethel (Hebrew, "House [temple] of God") that the patriarch anointed a pillar with oil, vowed a vow, and received a vision of Yahweh and the gate of heaven (Genesis 28:11–18; 31:13).

Numerous references describe the anointing of objects and inanimate things during the period of Moses and the Tabernacle. Moses was commanded by the Lord to anoint all the vessels, appurtenances, and items that belonged to

the Tabernacle (Numbers 7:1). This included the altar, the ark of the covenant, the work table with its vessels, the seven-branched lampstand with its vessels, the altar of incense, the altar of burnt offering, the wash basin, and other instruments belonging to the temple system (Exodus 30:26–33; 40:9–10). On a regular basis, unleavened wafers were also anointed with oil (Exodus 29:2; Leviticus 2:4; 7:12; Numbers 6:15). It is probable that all non-natural items, or all artificial things touched by human hands that were located within the precinct of the Tabernacle, were anointed with oil.

To heighten the import of the actual day of anointing of the Tabernacle and its appurtenances, a twelve-day “dedication of the altar” celebration was planned. Coinciding with the twelve days, each of the twelve tribes donated items for the Tabernacle. On the first day, for instance, the tribe of Judah presented their offerings of silver, gold, and sacrificial animals. The second-day offerings were presented by the tribe of Issachar, who was followed on subsequent days by the tribes of Zebulun, Reuben, Simeon, Gad, Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin, Dan, Asher, and on the twelfth day, Naphtali. In this decreed manner each tribe participated in the twelve-day rites, thus underscoring the primacy of the anointing ceremonies (Numbers 7). The gifts and offerings of the twelve tribal families were considerable. According to Numbers 7:88, “all the oxen for the sacrifice of the peace offerings” were twenty-four bullocks, sixty rams, sixty he-goats, and sixty lambs, and the amount of gold and silver donated as offerings was great.

THE RITUAL ANOINTING OF PRIESTS, PROPHETS, AND KINGS

Three groups of persons were recipients of the ritual

anointing: priests, prophets, and kings. Each of these groups will be briefly examined.

Priests

Aaron and his sons participated in an elaborate ritual that qualified them for temple service. The ritual, outlined in Exodus 29, comprised a four-part ceremony: (1) ritual ablutions, or the washing with water (Exodus 29:4); (2) the vesting rite, wherein Aaron was given eight sacred garments, including a breastplate, an *ephod*, a robe of the *ephod* (or robe of approach), a tunic, a turban, a sash, a golden plate of the turban, and "undergarments of plain linen"¹ (Exodus 29:5–6; the sons of Aaron were also vested); (3) the anointing ceremony with "the anointing oil," which was first poured upon the recipient's head and then smeared (Exodus 29:7); and (4) the sprinkling of oil mixed with the blood of a sacrificial victim (Exodus 29:21). Leviticus 8 records the active role played by Moses, the prophet of Israel, in the anointing ceremony of Aaron and his sons. Moses "washed them [Aaron and his sons] with water" (Leviticus 8:6); "He placed upon" Aaron the sacred vestments (Leviticus 8:7–9); afterward Moses "took the anointing oil and anointed the Tabernacle" and all of its vessels and appurtenances, including the altar (Leviticus 8:10–11). This ritual act was followed by the anointing of Aaron. The record states that Moses "poured of the anointing oil upon the head of Aaron, and anointed [or smeared] him with oil" (Leviticus 8:12). These procedures were followed by the vesting of Aaron's sons and an elaborate sacrificial procedure where a bullock was slaughtered (Leviticus 8:13–29). Finally, Moses took the anointing oil, mixed it with the blood of the sacrificial victim, and sprinkled this substance

upon Aaron and his garments and upon the sons of Aaron and their garments (Leviticus 8:30).

Those who received the anointing were sanctified and set apart from the profane world and were thus required to adhere to certain responsibilities. For instance, during the time of his ministry the anointed high priest was forbidden to touch a corpse, rend his clothes, uncover his head, go forth from the sanctuary, or profane the sanctuary, "for the crown of the anointing oil of his God is upon him" (Leviticus 21:10–12). Specific privileges also accompanied the anointing. Eleazar, the son of Aaron, was given responsibility for overseeing the daily meat offering, the oil for the light, the incense, and the anointing oil (Numbers 4:16). It was due to "the anointing" that Aaron and his sons were given responsibility for the hallowed things (Numbers 18:8). Special sacrifices were required to atone for the sins of an anointed priest (Leviticus 4:3–12) and a unique sacrificial offering was presented to the Lord for a priest on the day that he was anointed (Leviticus 6:20–22). The greatest duty of all for the anointed, vested high priest, both in terms of privilege and responsibility, took place on the Day of Atonement: "And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation. And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year" (Leviticus 16:32–34).

Prophets

Very little is written in the scriptures concerning the anointing of prophets. The Chronicler identifies the Patriarchs as prophets who had been anointed (1 Chronicles

16:22; cf. Psalm 105:15), and the author of 1 Kings 19:16 records that Elisha the son of Shaphat was to be anointed by Elijah. The actual anointing of Elisha, however, is not recorded in the Bible. It was Zechariah who metaphorically identified "two olive trees" as "two anointed ones" (Zechariah 4:11, 14).² John the Revelator, building upon the symbols of Zechariah, called the "two olive trees" witnesses who would prophesy in Jerusalem (Revelation 11:4), and according to latter-day revelation the two witnesses are "two prophets" who will "prophesy to the Jews after they are gathered and have built the city of Jerusalem" (D&C 77:15). Incidentally, the Zechariah 4 and Revelation 11 pericopes are set in a temple setting.³

Kings

The ritual anointing of kings within the biblical world is well attested.⁴ King Saul was anointed by the prophet Samuel. Samuel told Saul, "The Lord sent me to anoint thee to be king over his people, over Israel" (1 Samuel 15:1). Taking "a flask of oil," Samuel poured it upon Saul's head (1 Samuel 10:1). David was first anointed king over Judah (2 Samuel 2:4), and then again was anointed king over Israel (2 Samuel 5:3), in accordance with the word of the Lord through Samuel (1 Chronicles 11:3). Solomon, the third king of Israel, was anointed king by Zadok the priest under the direction of Nathan the prophet. A horn of oil, removed from the Tabernacle, was used for the anointing. Following the anointing, the trumpeteers blew the trumpet and all the people exclaimed, "God save king Solomon" (1 Kings 1:39, 45). A similar exclamation was uttered at the anointing ceremonies of kings Saul (1 Samuel 10:24), Jehoash (2 Kings 11:12), Absalom (2 Samuel 16:16; 2 Samuel 19:11), Adonijah (1 Kings 1:25), and Joash (2 Kings 11:12; 2 Chronicles 23:11).⁵

Other Israelite kings who received the anointing included Jehoahaz (2 Kings 23:30) and Jehu, the son of Jehoshaphat, who was anointed king by an unnamed prophet under the direction of Elisha. After the oil was poured over the head of king Jehu, the unnamed prophet declared, "Thus saith the Lord, I have anointed thee king over Israel" (2 Kings 9:3; cf. 6–10). The fact that the prophet or high priest took part in the ceremonial anointing emphasized the divine nature of the process. When a prophet anointed the king, it was as if the Lord himself had performed the anointing (2 Samuel 12:7; 2 Kings 9:3; cf. 2 Corinthians 1:21; Psalm 23:5; D&C 124:76).⁶ Further, the king of Tyre was called an "anointed cherub" (Ezekiel 28:14) and the author of the Parable of the Trees tells of several trees (persons) attempting to anoint a king to rule over them (Judges 9:8–15).

The Book of Mormon also evidences the anointing of kings. During the Jaredite period, Orihah, Jared, Emer, Coriantum, Morianton, and Corom were each "anointed to be king over the people" (Ether 6:27; 9:4, 14, 22; 10:10, 16). Centuries later Nephi, shortly before his death, anointed a man "to be a king and a ruler over his people" (Jacob 1:9).

The anointed king served as a theocratic servant of the Lord (1 Samuel 9:16; 10:1; 16:3; 24:6, 10–12; 2 Samuel 6:21)—he is called "the anointed of the Lord" (1 Samuel 24:6; 26:9, 11; 2 Samuel 1:14, 16).⁷ In a limited way, the anointed king possessed authority to participate with the priests and other temple officiants in the ministrations of the temple.⁸ King David built an altar and offered sacrifices (1 Chronicles 21:26; 2 Samuel 24:25), wore a linen ephod (1 Chronicles 15:27; 2 Samuel 6:14), and participated with Samuel in the ordinations of the Levite porters (1 Chronicles 9:22). David's successor-son, King Solomon, offered sacrifices upon the

altar of Gibeon (1 Kings 3:4) and sanctified the temple courtyard with sacrificial burnt offerings (1 Kings 8:64). The same king, standing before the temple's altar, raised his hands toward heaven and offered the dedicatory prayer on behalf of the newly built temple that would bear his name (1 Kings 8:22–63).

THE ANOINTING RITE

The anointing rite was accorded to four separate groups: temple objects, priests, prophets, and kings. Through a close reading of the same biblical writings it is possible to discover several commonalities that appear to be present at the anointing rite of the four groups. While it must be admitted that the scriptural accounts of the anointing ceremonies are at best sketchy and oftentimes reflect subordinate goals of the individual writers, the following commonalities seem apparent.

1. The prophet of God held a prominent position in the anointing process. The biblical text makes it clear that the laws or instructions regarding ritual anointings with olive oil were established through the word of the Lord to his prophet. "Now the Lord had told Samuel in his ear" regarding the anointing of Saul (1 Samuel 9:15–16). Later Samuel explained to Saul, "The Lord sent me to anoint thee" (1 Samuel 15:1). Concerning the anointing of David, "the Lord said unto Samuel . . . fill thine horn with oil" (1 Samuel 16:1; 1 Chronicles 11:3). Elijah was explicitly commanded by the Lord to anoint Jehu to be king of Israel and to anoint Elisha to be a prophet. The "Lord said unto him . . . thou shalt anoint [Jehu] to be king over Israel" (1 Kings 19:16). The Lord also spoke to Moses concerning the anointing of Aaron and his sons (Exodus 29:1–7). Perhaps it is more than coincidence that many of the prophets involved in the

anointing rite were entitled "Man of God." Such was the case with Samuel (1 Samuel 9:7), Elijah (1 Kings 17:18; 2 Kings 1:9), and Elisha (2 Kings 4:7; 5:8; 6:6; 7:2; 13:19).

2. The administration of the anointing rite was carried out by a prophet or by an individual acting under his direction. Moses himself anointed the sacred objects and vessels of the Tabernacle (Numbers 7:1). Moses also performed the anointings of Aaron and the sons of Aaron (Exodus 30:30); the prophet Samuel anointed Saul with his own hands (1 Samuel 10:1); Zadok the priest anointed Solomon with a horn of oil under the direction of Nathan the prophet (1 Kings 1:38–39, 45). Samuel anointed David king of Judah (1 Samuel 16:13) and later David was anointed by the Elders of Israel under the direction of Samuel (1 Chronicles 11:3).

3. The anointing rite included a ritual gesture. The person administering the anointing first poured oil from a horn upon the head of the recipient. This act was followed by the "anointing" or "smearing" of the oil upon the head. The Lord told Moses, "Then shalt thou take the anointing oil, and pour it upon his head, and anoint him" (Exodus 29:7; Leviticus 21:10). Subsequent prophets apparently followed the same process (see, for example, 1 Samuel 10:1). The use of the hand in the anointing process is significant. The Hebrew word for "hand" (*yād*) carries the symbolic meaning of "power."⁹ Conceivably, when a person is anointed, power symbolically flows through the hands of the anointer to the head of the recipient of the anointing.

4. The anointing act was frequently a participatory ritual, involving two or more individuals. The person conducting the ritual and the recipient of the anointing, of course, were present. Often, others witnessed the ceremony as well. Moses washed, vested, and anointed Aaron and his sons in the presence of an assembly "gathered together unto

the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation" (Leviticus 8:3–12). David was anointed king "in the midst of his brethren" (1 Samuel 16:13). Compare also the anointing rites involving other Israelite kings, where the text indicates that other individuals were present at the ceremonies (1 Kings 1:39, 45; 1:25; 2 Kings 11:12; 1 Samuel 10:24; 2 Samuel 16:16; 19:11).

5. The ritual anointing with olive oil followed an ablution ritual (a ritual washing with water).¹⁰ Aaron and his sons were first washed with water and immediately afterwards were vested and anointed (Exodus 40:12–15; 29:4–7). On one occasion King David prepared himself to worship the Lord in the temple. Second Samuel 12:20 records the order of his preparations: washing, anointing, changing his clothing, and finally entering into the temple. "Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the Lord, and worshipped" (2 Samuel 12:20). No explicit mention of ritual ablutions is made at the anointing of King Solomon, but the fact that the ceremony took place at the Gihon Springs outside of the walls of the temple suggests that Solomon was indeed washed with water (1 Kings 1:33, 38, 45). Similarly, the Talmud teaches that King Adonija was anointed king at the Rogel Springs.¹¹ Interestingly, Ruth's preparations for approaching her future husband Boaz comprised a ritual process that included washing herself, anointing herself, and finally clothing herself (Ruth 3:3). Metaphorically, the city of Jerusalem was washed with water and anointed with oil by the hand of the Lord (Ezekiel 16:9).

6. It may appear superfluous to mention, but the ritual anointing required a physical substance—olive oil. The symbols involved with olive oil will be discussed below.

7. The locale of the ritual anointing was significant. The setting for Aaron and his sons was at the “door of the Tabernacle of the congregation” (Exodus 40:12–15; 29:4–7). Solomon was anointed at the Gihon Spring, outside of the temple walls. The import of these locales will be discussed later.

8. Anointed individuals potentially acquired several heavenly boons. For instance, persons who received the anointing were protected by God (1 Chronicles 16:22; Psalm 105:15; 89:20–23; D&C 121:16), were taught from on high (1 John 2:27), and gained salvation (Psalm 20:6; 28:8; D&C 109:80). In addition, the Lord showed mercy to his anointed (2 Samuel 22:51; Psalm 18:50). Similarly, it was forbidden for souls to speak out against the anointed of the Lord (1 Samuel 24:6, 10; 26:9, 11, 23; 2 Samuel 19:21).¹²

THE RELIGIOUS SYMBOLISM OF THE ANOINTING

Similar to all rituals and ceremonies, the anointing of the objects and persons held symbolic religious significance. Although the symbols attached to the anointing rite are numerous, they may be categorized into four groups: (1) The anointing sanctified an object or person for divine service; (2) the anointing represented a “gesture of approach,” allowing the anointed person to approach sacred space; (3) olive oil signified the Holy Ghost; and (4) the anointing rite was Christ centered—persons who received the anointing became a type or shadow of Jesus Christ, who is the Anointed One.

The Anointing Sanctified an Object or Person for Divine Service

One of the primary goals of the ritual anointing was to

sanctify an object or individual for divine service to the Lord. The well-attested expression “to sanctify” seems to be a motive clause both showing result and answering the question, “Why are temple objects and persons anointed?” In the following passages, note the manner in which the motive clause “to sanctify” follows the anointing of an object or person:

“And thou shalt *anoint* it [the altar], to *sanctify* it” (Exodus 29:36).

“And thou shalt *anoint* the altar . . . and *sanctify* the altar (Exodus 40:10).

“And thou shalt *anoint* the laver . . . and *sanctify* it” (Exodus 40:11).

“And *anoint* him [Aaron], and *sanctify* him” (Exodus 40:13).

Moses “*anointed* it [the Tabernacle], and *sanctified* it” (Numbers 7:1).

Moses “*anointed* them [the altar and vessels], and *sanctified* them” (Numbers 7:1).

Moses “*anointed* the Tabernacle and all that was therein, and *sanctified* them” (Leviticus 8:10).

Moses “*anointed* the altar and its vessels, both the laver and his foot, to *sanctify* them” (Leviticus 8:11).

Moses “poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron’s head, and *anointed* him, to *sanctify* him” (Leviticus 8:12).

“*Anoint* them [Aaron’s sons], and consecrate them, and *sanctify* them” (Exodus 28:40–41).

It is necessary to discuss the meaning of the Hebrew root *qdš*, which in English is translated “to sanctify.” In the Hebrew Bible¹³ the principal root from which the English word *temple* originates is also *qdš*, which has the basic meaning of “separation” or “withdrawal” of sacred entities from profane things.¹⁴ The term has reference to many aspects of the sacred, all of which are directly connected to

its root meaning, the separation of the sacred from the profane. Specifically, *qđš* has reference to:

1. God, his name, and his divine actions (Exodus 15:11; Leviticus 20:3).

2. The set-apartness and sanctity of holy places connected with Deity, such as the Tabernacle (Exodus 38:24; 40:9), the Jerusalem temple (2 Chronicles 29:5), the Ezekielian temple (Ezekiel 42:14), the city of Jerusalem (Isaiah 48:2), and the land of Israel (Zechariah 2:12).

3. Things directly associated with sacred places, such as the temple furniture (Exodus 30:29; 2 Chronicles 35:3), the altar (Exodus 29:37; Deuteronomy 9:24), anointing oil (Exodus 30:25), incense (Exodus 30:35), priestly vestments (Leviticus 16:4), and the bread of the presence (1 Samuel 21:5).

4. Persons directly associated with sacred places, such as the priests (Leviticus 21:6) and the people of Israel (Jeremiah 2:3; Psalm 114:2).

5. Holy days and festivals (Isaiah 58:13; Exodus 35:2).¹⁵

All of the five items listed above—God, sacred places, temple vessels and appurtenances, persons, and holy days—have direct or indirect connections with the Israelite temple system. All are to remain separate and distinguished from profane deities, places, instruments, and persons. A summary of the holinesses attached to God and God's things is found in the Purity Code (Leviticus 11–17; Numbers 19) and the Holiness Code (Leviticus 17–26), essential sections of the Pentateuch. These sections outline the manner in which Israel is to remain pure and free from profane things. On more than a dozen occasions Yahweh explicitly commands Israel to be holy as he is holy. Leviticus 11:44–45, for instance, states, "For I am Yahweh your God. You will therefore sanctify yourselves, and you will be holy,

for I am holy. . . . Because I am Yahweh that has brought you from the land of Egypt, to be your God. You will therefore be holy, because I am holy."¹⁶

The verbal forms of the Hebrew root *qdš* also demonstrate a relationship with the temple. By way of an overview of the various Hebrew verbal forms, the Qal verbal form of *qdš* denotes something that is "holy" or "withheld from profane use." The Niphal form refers to showing or proving "oneself holy." In the Hiphil verbal form, the root letters *qdš* have reference to the dedication or sanctification of a person or thing to be sacred. The Piel verbal form is utilized in the examples listed above. This form is a factitive (causative) type and essentially speaks of placing a thing or person "into the state of holiness" or declaring something holy.¹⁷ The motive clause cited previously, "to sanctify," originates from the Piel verbal form of the root *qdš* and is therefore intimately connected to God and his temple. Hence, after the anointing with olive oil, the recipient of the anointing is declared holy and considered to be in a state of holiness. That is to say, at least in a theoretical sense, the recipient is now worthy to stand before God in sacred places, participate in sacred time, and to interact with the other sacred persons and objects in the temple setting. The recipient, like the temple itself, is "set apart" and "wholly other"¹⁸ from the profaneness of the world. In short, the anointed person or object is sanctified.

Naturally, if the consecrated oil possesses (symbolic) powers to create a uniquely holy (sanctified and set apart) individual, it too must retain a quality of otherness and uniqueness. Repeatedly the oil is called holy. It shall be a "holy anointing oil . . . it is holy, and it shall be holy unto you . . . it shall be unto you most holy . . . it shall be unto thee holy for the Lord" (Exodus 30:31–32, 36–37). Further-

more, the Lord instructed Moses not to “make any other [ointment] like it, after the composition of it” for “whosoever compoundeth any like it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his people” (Exodus 30:32–33, 38).¹⁹ So uniquely powerful was the anointing with the consecrated oil that even the objects or persons who received the smearing of oil were able to communicate this holiness to others. This concept, recorded in Exodus 30:29, states that whosoever or whatsoever thing that touched an anointed thing would also become holy.

The Anointing Represents a “Gesture of Approach”

Inasmuch as the concepts of sacred and profane have reference to two antithetical powers—the profane that contaminates, the sacred that sanctifies—the two must be strictly separated.²⁰ Profane dust and unholy articles and temporal clothing must not enter the sacred. Man must not mix the mundane with the holy. Recently healed lepers, men and women with fresh uncleannesses, and hands that have touched a corpse must not enter into holy space without heeding the laws of approach. Similarly, the sacred must not be taken out into profane space. The two cannot be fused. “Any attempt, outside the prescribed limits, to unite sacred and profane brings confusion and disaster.”²¹ Therefore, those who wish to leave profane space in order to approach sacred temple space must participate in a purifying ritual, a gesture²² or rite of approach; for example, the removal of shoes, the washing of hands, the anointing with oil.

The gesture of approach is vital to a temple society.²³ It is a rite or ceremonial act that symbolically cleanses the person and prepares him for entry into the sacred. The person prepares not only to enter sacred time, where sacred acts

take place and where man's religious ideals are celebrated, but he prepares for entry into sacred space, where even the airspace about his head is considered to be holy. He leaves behind him the sphere of profane time, the mundane events of common life, and the ordure of the world. The conditions of the rite of approach must be clearly defined and adhered to, the rites of purification must be well described, and the transition from profane to sacred must be marked.

The entry into the sacred is potentially dangerous. Those who enter or serve in the sacred arena when unprepared are subject to death by the hands of man or the power of God. At the very least, the trespasser will be flogged. The trespass laws apply to everyone—the *zār* (stranger or foreigner), the layman, and members of the priesthood.²⁴

A few late examples will clearly identify the gestures of approach. The Israelites of the Second Commonwealth²⁵ adhered to specific rites or "gestures of approach"²⁶ as they approached the temple. Four aspects regarding the rites of approach will be examined. All worshipers were required to participate in (1) the removal of profane items and (2) ritual ablutions—immersion (Hebrew *tevilah*) and the cleansing of hands and feet. In addition, it was requisite for members of the priesthood (3) to dress in the vestments of the priesthood and (4) to be anointed with oil.

1. *The removal of personal profane items.* A vital aspect of the rite of approach included the removal of items that were unclean, profane, or temporal. The prescription of the Second Temple period to remove one's shoes before entering sacred space is based upon Exodus 3:1–14. This pericope provides a quintessential example of an approach ritual. Moses was commanded by God to remove his shoes: "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (Exodus 3:5). Joshua, the suc-

cessor to Moses, participated in a similar experience (Joshua 5:15).²⁷

2. *Ritual ablutions—immersion (Hebrew *tevilah*) and the cleansing of hands and feet.* The cleansing of the hands and feet of the priest was a positive commandment based upon Exodus 30:19. It was incumbent upon a priest to wash his hands and feet ritually lest he incur the death penalty by the hand of heaven (Exodus 30:20).²⁸

Strategically, the ritual immersion pools that belonged to the laypersons were located immediately outside of the walls of the temple precinct.²⁹ In this manner persons who approached any of the sacred zones of the temple could move from the cleansing pool directly onto the holy mount. There is both archaeological and literary evidence that there existed two separate paths to the *mikveh* (ritual immersion pool) to prevent contact between a ritually pure person exiting the bath and an unclean person entering into the bath.³⁰ The pools of immersion for members of the priesthood were located beneath the temple.³¹ According to the Talmud, the cleansing pool was required of one “who moves from profane ground into holy ground.”³²

3. *Dressing in the vestments of the priesthood.* A final rite of approach applicable to members of the priesthood pertained to the sacred vestments. The ordinary priestly vestments consisted of four parts: breeches, a headpiece, a girdle, and a tunic. The four garments were stored in four separate cupboards so that they would not be mixed one with another. The order of dressing himself in the vestments was as follows: first the breeches were put on, followed by the tunic; then the girdle, which was wound around the body and then tied; finally, the mitre was placed upon the head of the priest. The high priestly vestments consisted of eight pieces, the four belonging to the priest plus an ephod,

robe, breastplate, and frontplate. The high priest wore four vestments on the Day of Atonement. The vestments, white in color, included a girdle, tunic, mitre, and breeches.³³

The sacred vestments were an integral part of the temple setting. High priests and priests who were divested of their sacred vestments were permitted to exit the temple after their services were performed. One could not take the priestly vestments around town.³⁴ If a high priest exited the Temple Mount with his priestly vestments the law dictated that he receive forty stripes.³⁵ The priestly vestments were to remain stored within the temple precinct when not in use. Even worn or soiled garments of the priests were not discarded in a profane manner but were used as the wicks of the lights for the temple.³⁶

4. *The rite of anointing.* This rite played an integral role in the various rites of approach. As noted previously, the rite succeeded the ritual ablutions with pure water, but preceded the vesting rite. The rite of anointing sanctified the individual and prepared him for entrance into the temple. The locale where the anointing rite took place was significant. For the priests of the Mosaic law, the anointing rite took place at the door of the court of the people, outside of the temple proper. For Solomon, the anointing rite was administered near the temple, but outside of its walls. Hence the gestures (for example, the pouring of oil upon the head of the recipient followed by the smearing of the oil) associated with the anointing prepared the individual outside of the temple to approach the holinesses located within the walls of the temple. The moment of anointing in the sequence of temple rituals was also significant, for both ablutions and anointings preceded the temple's sacrificial ceremonies. It is only after the gestures of approach have transpired that individuals are permitted to approach Deity.

Olive Oil Signified the Holy Ghost³⁷

A number of scriptures symbolically connect olive oil with the Holy Ghost. At the moment of the anointing of King Saul the “Spirit of the Lord” came upon him causing him to “be turned into another man” (1 Samuel 10:1, 6, 9). Sometime later David was anointed by the prophet Samuel and immediately (“from that day forward”) “the Spirit of the Lord came upon David. . . . But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul” (1 Samuel 16:13–14; cf. 1 Samuel 18:12).³⁸ In these verses the Spirit of the Lord came upon the anointed king (first Saul) and remained with him until his successor (King David) received the anointing. At that moment the Spirit left Saul.

Speaking messianically, Isaiah wrote, “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek” (Isaiah 61:1). While preaching in the synagogue of Nazareth Jesus read this passage and applied it to his own messianic station, “This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears” (Luke 4:18, 21). Note the resultant nature of the conjunction “because.” Why is the Spirit of the Lord resting upon the Messiah? Because he has received the anointing.

The New Testament writers employed similar olive oil/Holy Ghost typology in their writings. In the parable of the ten virgins, the five virgins who are prepared to meet the bridegroom are those whose lamps are full of oil or whose lives are full of the Holy Ghost. These are they who are “wise and have received the truth, and have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide” (D&C 45:56–57; Matthew 25:1–14). The connection between oil and the Holy Ghost in these passages is both direct and instructive.

Luke identified olive oil as being representative of the Holy Ghost when he wrote, “God anointed Jesus of

Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power" (Acts 10:38). John associated the anointing of oil with the Holy Ghost or with receiving divine truth and being taught from on high (JST, 1 John 2:20–27). Paul also made a direct connection between the two when he wrote that he who "hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Corinthians 1:21–22).

Additional references make implicit connections between olive oil and the Holy Ghost. The connection between the anointing and sanctification (for example, the Holy Ghost is the sanctifier) has already been discussed previously. Perhaps the fact that olive oil was employed in the temple's lamps for lighting purposes (Exodus 27:20) points to the Holy Ghost, who provides light to individuals.³⁹ Similar symbolism is found in the two prophetic witnesses of the last days who are called lamps (Revelation 11); in King David, who is referred to as the "lamp of Israel" (2 Samuel 21:17); and in righteous individuals, who are metaphorically called the "light of the world" (Matthew 5:14–16).⁴⁰ These individuals receive their light from the Holy Ghost.⁴¹ The New Testament ordinance of anointing the sick with oil was performed to bring about both a physical and a spiritual healing (James 5:14–15). Certainly the Holy Ghost plays a vital role in the spiritual recovery of sinful souls.

Finally, the relationship between the baptismal rite and the anointing rite deserves investigation.⁴² Many similarities exist between the two. The ordinance of baptism, representing a ritual washing, is followed by the reception of the Holy Ghost (baptism by fire), and the ordinance of ritual ablutions (washings) is followed by the anointing with olive oil (for example, the Holy Ghost). Both rites are connected with the idea of an entrance through a gateway. The bap-

tismal rite represents a gateway into the kingdom of God (2 Nephi 31:9, 18); the anointing rite is a gesture of approach that permits the recipient of the rite to enter through the entrance hall of the temple. In connection with the gateway, it is interesting to note that Jesus metaphorically signifies the “door” (John 10:7, 9), and he is called the “keeper of the gate” (2 Nephi 9:41). Both the baptismal and anointing rites transform the recipient into a new person, a new creation. After the anointing of King Saul, for instance, it is written that Saul was “turned into another man,” for “God gave him another heart” (1 Samuel 10:1, 6, 9). Similarly, those who are baptized “walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4). And both provide a sanctification from sin and worldliness (1 Corinthians 6:11; Hebrews 10:22). Concerning the sanctifying powers that come from the combination of ritual ablutions and reception of the Holy Ghost, Titus wrote, “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost” (Titus 3:5).

The Anointing Rite Was Christ-Centered—Priests, Prophets, and Kings Were Types of Christ

A number of scriptural references evidence the fact that Jesus Christ received the sacred anointing. In Psalm 45, a royal wedding hymn authored by an anonymous poet, Yahweh is represented as being anointed with oil by God. Psalm 45:7 reads, “Therefore Yahweh,⁴³ thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy companions.” Paul, speaking of the Father and the Son, quoted the same scripture in his epistle to the Hebrews (Hebrews 1:9). Two citations in the Acts of the Apostles further indicate a divine anointing of Christ by God (Acts 10:38; 4:27).

The significance of two well-known titles of Jesus—

Christ and *Messiah*—is instructive. *Messiah* is a transliteration of the Hebrew *māshîah*, a term meaning “anointed one.” Similarly, *Christ* is a transliteration of the Greek *christós*, which also denotes “anointed one.” Both terms were employed by John when he wrote “the Messias [Messiah], which is, being interpreted, the Christ” (John 1:41; see also 4:25). The names are often used in the scriptures and attest to the fact that Jesus was the Anointed One who was set apart to perform the service of the Father in the temple. Jesus was “a high priest . . . a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle” (Hebrews 8:1–2). He was in many respects similar to the high priest of the Mosaic system, who appeared before God in the Holy of Holies. Jesus, however, appeared in the heavenly temple (Hebrews 9:24). Further, Jesus, as the anointed one, offered a “great and last sacrifice” (Alma 34:10) on behalf of the community of Israel, which offering consisted of “the sacrifice of himself” (Hebrews 9:26).

It has been noted that priests, prophets, and kings were ritually anointed with olive oil. Each worthy priest, prophet, and king who received the anointing imitated the anointing of Jesus and also became a *messiah*, or an anointed one. As such, each became an archetype (from Greek, *typos*, meaning a blow, impression, model), a figure, or image of Jesus, who, as the antitype, was the Messiah.⁴⁴ The ministerial duties of the priest, the prophetic role of the prophet, and the royal authority of the king reside in an integral way with Jesus. Priests, prophets, and kings represent the shadow; Jesus signifies the character that creates the shadow. This concept of types and shadows becomes more conclusive when it is realized that Jesus was denominated “Priest” (Psalm 110:4),⁴⁵ “Prophet” (Deuteronomy 18:18;

John 6:14; Mark 6:4), and “King” (Moses 7:53; Psalm 48:1–8)⁴⁶ by a number of prophetic writers.⁴⁷

SUMMARY

It is evident from the biblical writings that both animate objects (priests, prophets, and kings) and inanimate objects (vessels and instruments belonging to the temple) were anointed with olive oil as part of an Israelite religious ritual. The religious symbolism of the anointing rite had four parts. (1) The anointing rite served to sanctify and set apart an object or person for divine service. (2) The anointing was part of a “gesture of approach” rite that qualified the anointed person to approach sacred space. (3) Olive oil, the material utilized in the anointing ritual, signified the Holy Ghost. Those who received the anointing were sanctified through the agency of the Holy Ghost, enabling them to enter the presence of Deity. (4) Anointed priests, prophets, and kings were types or shadows of Jesus Christ, who is the Anointed One. Their anointing echoed the anointing of the Messiah. Certainly the anointing ritual was Christ centered. Metaphorically, Jesus is the “Horn of Salvation” (Luke 1:69), a reference to the horn of oil that is poured upon recipients of the anointing (1 Samuel 16:1; 1 Kings 1:39, 45).

Notes

1. John I. Durham, *Exodus* (Waco: Word Books, 1982), 385. The subject of sacred priestly vestments is discussed on pages 384–90.

2. Or “sons who press out oil,” Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, eds., *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros* (Leiden: Brill, 1953), 796. For a comparison of Zechariah 4 and Revelation 11, see Kenneth A. Strand, “The Two Olive Trees of Zechariah 4 and Revelation 11,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 20 (1982): 258.

3. It is clear that in this dispensation, Joseph Smith, similar to the prophets of old, was also anointed (see D&C 124:57).

4. Regarding the royal anointment of kings in Mesopotamia and Egypt, see Anton Schoors, “Isaiah, the Minister of Royal Anoint-

ment," *Oudtestamentische Studien* 20 (1977): 88–91; Z. Weisman, "Anointing as a Motif in the Making of the Charismatic King," *Biblica* 57 (1976): 382–94; C. R. North, "The Religious Aspects of Hebrew Kingship," *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 50 (1932): 14; and Ernst Kutsch, *Salbung als Rechtsakt im Alten Testament und im Alten Orient* (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1963), 40–51. For the anointment of kings among the ancient Syrians, see A. M. Hocart, *Kingship* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), 86. According to Hocart, the anointing rite belongs to coronation ceremonies of many cultures (70–71).

5. Hocart, *Kingship*, 30, believes that the exclamation "God save the King," a common regal expression connected with modern societies, "has been handed down to us" from an "ancient theology." The expression "can be traced directly or through Byzantine rites to the coronation of the Roman Emperors or of Joash, King of Judah."

6. This concept that the Lord himself is performing the ordinance by the hand of one of his representatives is also found in D&C 36:2, where the Lord states, "And I will lay my hand upon you by the hand of my servant Sidney Rigdon."

7. Compare also the expressions "my anointed" (1 Samuel 2:35) and "his anointed" (1 Samuel 2:10), where the personal pronouns refer to the Lord.

8. Regarding the religious nature of Hebrew kingship, North, "The Religious Aspects of Hebrew Kingship," 10, wrote, "Speaking generally, kings . . . exercised important priestly functions."

9. Koehler and Baumgartner, eds., *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros*, 363.

10. Compare, however, the ceremony involving Levi, where the anointing ritual precedes the ablutions. Recorded in the *Testament of Levi* 8:1–11, the account states that Levi was first anointed by a man dressed in white, a rite which was followed by a washing with pure water by a second person dressed in white.

11. TB *Keritot* 5b, and TB *Horayot* 12a.

12. It was a serious crime to speak out against or to act against one of the Lord's anointed. We are reminded of a certain Amalekite man who slew Saul. The Amalekite was in turn slaughtered by King David. Such a strong measure was meted out by David because the Amalekite had slain the Lord's anointed (2 Samuel 1:6–16).

13. See Yehoshua M. Grintz, "bēt hamiqdāš" (in Hebrew), in B. Natanyahu, ed., *Encyclopedia Hebraica* (Jerusalem: Encyclopaedia Printing, 1957), 8:555, where the different names of the temple as they appear in the Hebrew Bible are listed, *bēt Yhwh*, *bēt Elôhîm*, *hēkāl qôdeš*, *hēkāl Yhwh*, and *miqdāš*. The usual name in the Mishnah and

related literature, i.e., the Tosephta, is *bēt hamiqdāš*. Of this name the encyclopedia states, "This name is found only one time in the Bible" (555). The *Targum of Jeremiah* calls the temple the "house of the Shekinah" (2:7; 3:17; 7:15; 14:10; 15:1).

14. Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, trans. Edward Robinson (Oxford: Clarendon, 1977), 871.

15. *Ibid.*, 871–72. Roger Caillois, *Man and the Sacred*, trans. Meyer Barash (Westport: Greenwood, 1980), 20, summarizes the sacred as being "related as a common property, solid or ephemeral, to certain objects (the instruments of the cult), to certain beings (kings, priests), to certain places (temple, church, mountain peak), to certain times."

16. Deity is always the ultimate source of holiness in a temple setting—"The holy or the Holy One are simultaneously that which awakens fear and that which draws to itself"—as Sigmund Mowinckel has shown, *Religion and Cult*, trans. John F. X. Sheehan (Milwaukee: Marquette University, 1981), 54–55. The work was originally written under the title *Religion og Kultus* (Oslo: Land og Kirke, 1950). For a definition and treatment of the concept of holy, see Rudolf Otto's classic work, *The Idea of the Holy*, trans. John W. Harvey (London: Oxford University Press, 1958).

17. Koehler and Baumgartner, eds., *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros*, 825–26.

18. The concept of the holy as being "wholly other" was introduced by Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, 25–30.

19. *Pseudo-Philo* states that Moses himself consecrated the holy anointing oil (*Pseudo-Philo* 13:1).

20. Speaking of sacred and profane space, J. G. Davies writes, "The one is potent, full of power, while the other is powerless. They cannot therefore approach one another without losing their proper nature: either the sacred will consume the profane or the profane will contaminate and enfeeble the sacred." Davies, "Architecture," in Mircea Eliade, ed., *Encyclopedia of Religion*, 16 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1987), 1:384.

21. *Ibid.*, 1:385.

22. Mayer I. Gruber, *Aspects of Nonverbal Communication in the Ancient Near East*, 2 vols. (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1980), 1:22–49, treats the subject of ritualistic gestures of worship and supplication in Hebrew and Ugaritic settings.

23. The rite of transition is common to many religions, says Raglan. "This ritual gradually dwindles, but people still mark their transition from the profane to the sacred sphere by removing their

hats—or their boots.” Fitzroy R. S. Raglan, *The Temple and the House* (New York: Norton, 1964), 31.

24. The laws regarding trespass as outlined in the Pentateuch are oftentimes not well defined. The rabbinic literature is helpful in this regard. For instance, when a ritually impure priest ministered, he was not taken to a court of law but “young priests” took him from the courtyard and with clubs broke his head (M *Sanhedrin* 9:6; 10:1). Likewise, if a non-priest served in the temple he was killed either by strangling or by “the hands of Heaven” (M *Sanhedrin* 9:6; 10:1; see also TB *Sanhedrin* 81b). Furthermore, if a priest lacked atonement or was a *tebul yom* and deliberately entered the temple court, he incurred the penalty of excommunication. On a prescription based upon Leviticus 16:2, a priest who stepped across the prescribed boundaries of his zone (beyond the first eleven cubits of the entrance to the tripartite building, cf. TB *Yoma* 16b) incurred forty lashes or if he entered within the veil of the Holy of Holies he incurred death at the hands of heaven (TB *Menahoth* 27b; cf. T *Kelim* 1:6), meaning no human punishment would be rendered. Foreigners who trespassed the temple precinct were also liable to death (TB *Sanhedrin* 83b).

25. We will momentarily look at a historically late temple community, for the rabbinic writings provide a comparatively clear picture of several gestures of approach.

26. It is difficult to ascertain who first coined the phrase “gestures of approach.” Certainly it is now a common expression, utilized by many. See, for example, Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, trans. Rosemary Sheed (New York: Meridian Books, 1958), 370-71, and Baruch M. Bokser, “Approaching Sacred Space,” *Harvard Theological Review* 78/3-4 (1985): 279-80, 299.

27. *Exodus Rabbah*, making reference to Exodus 3:1-14, observes that one must always remove his shoes before the Divine Presence, and that is the very reason that the priests ministered barefoot (*Exodus Rabbah* 2:6). Apparently the symbolic purpose of removing the shoes was so that profane dust would not be carried onto sacred ground and sacred dust would not be carried out into profane space. The law regarding the removal of shoes before entering the temple is repeated many times within the Mishnah, Talmud, and other literatures (TB *Yebamoth* 6b, 102b; M *Berakot* 9:5; TB *Berakot* 61b-62b; *Ecclesiastes Rabbah* 4:14). The same references require that the dust on the feet be removed before entrance, and *Sifre on Deuteronomy Pisqa* 258 warns against even the carrying of the shoes by hand upon the Temple Mount.

28. The rite of cleansing the hands and feet has been summarized by Maimonides, *Yad VIII*, 3, 5.

29. For photographs of the ritual baths and commentary, see Benjamin Mazar, "Herod's Temple/Functions of the Outer Walls and Gate of the Temple Mount," in Benjamin Mazar et al., eds., *The Mountain of the Lord* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1975), 146–47.

30. R. Reich, "Mishnah, Sheqalim 8:2 and the Archaeological Evidence" (in Hebrew), in A. Oppenheimer, U. Rappaport, and M. Stern, eds., *Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period, Abraham Schalit Memorial Volume* (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1980), 225–56, produces archaeological evidence. His paper contains drawings of the baths. Literary evidence is found in the *Letter of Aristeas*, which states: "There are steps leading to the thoroughfares. Some people make their way above them, others go underneath them, their principal aim being to keep away from the main road for the sake of those who are involved in purification rites, so as not to touch any forbidden object," verse 106, R. J. H. Shutt, trans., "Letter of Aristeas," in James A. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 vols. (Garden City: Doubleday, 1985), 2:20.

31. *M Tamid* 1:1.

32. *TB Yoma* 30a.

33. The garments of the priesthood were holy (Exodus 28:2–3) and therefore the rules regarding them were strict. Priests who slept within the walls of the temple did not sleep in their sacred clothing but placed them under or opposite their heads (*TB Tamid* 26a). If any member of the priesthood tore the vestments (cf. Exodus 28:32), he was punished by flogging. According to Leviticus 16:4, one must not allow any unclean thing to enter between his flesh and the vestments. Dirt, a single hair, a dead gnat, or other items were not allowed to come between the flesh and holy garments. If by chance anything was found there the service of that priest would be declared invalid. Nor was the priest permitted to place his hand under his vestments or allow a loose thread to hang from the vestments. When a priest or high priest was "lacking in vestments," meaning he was wearing less than the four prescribed vestments while ministering, or the high priest was wearing less than eight vestments, then his ministerial services were considered to be invalid, and his punishment was death by the hand of heaven. Equally so, if the priest or high priest wore too many vestments he was liable to die by the hands of heaven.

34. *TB Tamid* 27b.

35. *Numbers Rabbah* 19:19.

36. *TB Shabbath* 21a; Maimonides, *Yad VIII*, 7, 5.

37. Several scholars have recognized a symbolic connection between olive oil and the Holy Ghost. Sebastian Brock, "The Syrian Baptismal Ordines," *Studia Liturgica* 12 (1977): 177–83, for instance, states, "The oil is always very closely associated with the Holy Spirit" (181). Kenneth A. Strand, "The Two Olive Trees of Zechariah 4 and Revelation 11," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 20 (1982): 258, also believes that oil represents the Holy Spirit.

38. Hocart, *Kingship*, 86, states that "the theory is clear: after the unction the Spirit of the Lord came upon Saul. . . . The Spirit of the Lord also came upon David after his anointing."

39. Compare 2 *Enoch* 22:6, where Enoch describes the oil as being greater than the "greatest light."

40. It is well known that many peoples in the world of antiquity utilized oil lamps for lighting both domestic and public buildings. See, for example, Varda Sussman, "Lighting the Way through History: The Evolution of Ancient Oil Lamps," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 11 (March/April 1985): 42–56, which identifies a variety of oil lamp shapes and sizes and details the history of lamp making in Palestine.

41. Once individuals receive the anointing they have the ability to see spiritual things by the light of the Holy Ghost (Revelation 3:18; Moses 6:35).

42. A number of early Christian groups possessed rituals wherein the baptismal candidate was anointed immediately before or after baptism. See, for example, Sebastian Brock, "The Syrian Baptismal Ordines," *Studia Liturgica* 12 (1977): 177–83; Gabriele Winkler, "The History of the Syriac Prebaptismal Anointing in the Light of the Earliest Armenian Sources," in A. Vööbus et al, eds., *Symposium Syriacum, 1976* (Roma: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1978): 317–24; Gabriele Winkler, "Original Meaning of the Prebaptismal Anointing and Its Implications," *Worship* 52 (January 1978): 24–45; Bernard Botte, "Postbaptismal Anointing in the Ancient Patriarchate of Antioch," in J. Vellian, ed., *Studies on Syrian Baptismal Rites* (Kottayam: C.M.S., 1973), 63–71.

43. Some Hebrew manuscripts read "Yahweh" rather than "God."

44. See Bruce V. Malchow, "The Wisdom of the Anointed," *Lutheran Quarterly* 28 (1976): 70–82. The author compares the anointing of the Israelite kings with the anointing of Jesus.

45. Besides being called a "priest," Jesus is also known as "high priest" (Hebrews 3:1; 4:14) and "minister" (Hebrews 8:2, 6).

46. Several other deific titles identify Jesus as the king: "King of glory" (Psalms 24:3–7), "King of Kings" (Revelation 19:16), "King of

the Jews" (John 19:14–22), "King of Zion" (Moses 7:53), "Messiah the Prince" (Daniel 9:25).

47. See Joseph Fielding McConkie and Donald W. Parry, *A Guide to Scriptural Symbols* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1990), 139, 154–55.

12

The Allegory of the Olive Tree and the Use of Related Figurative Language in the Ancient Near East and the Old Testament

David Rolph Seely

The prophecy of Zenos in Jacob 5 is often called the allegory of the olive tree. The objective of this study is to examine this allegory in the larger context of figurative language in the ancient Near East and, in particular, in its own literary tradition preserved in the Old Testament. Through general comparisons we can gain better perspectives on the allegory's relationship to other ancient traditions, a better understanding of its contents, and an appreciation for the Book of Mormon, which restored this marvelous piece to us.

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE AND JACOB 5

Figurative language is an integral part of all of the Near Eastern literary traditions from the very earliest times. A prominent literary figure is comparison: in a simple form it is called a simile or a metaphor and in a more developed and extended form it is called a parable or an allegory. Modern literary theory has carefully defined and distinguished between each of these figures: simile, metaphor, parable, allegory, fable, proverb, and riddle. Briefly, modern theory defines a simile as a comparison of two dissimilar

things using the words *like* or *as*. A metaphor is a comparison that finds a likeness between two dissimilar things without using *like* or *as*. A parable is a narrative containing an extended simile or metaphor intending to convey a single thought or message. An allegory is also an extended simile or metaphor differing from a parable in that each metaphorical element of the narrative is meant to correspond to a specific counterpart. A fable is a story, parable, or allegory in which the characters are plants or animals that act like humans. A proverb is a pithy statement or adage, and a riddle is a parable whose point is deliberately obscured.

Ancient languages do not make such precise distinctions in their terms for figures of comparison. For example, in biblical Hebrew, the presumed original language of Jacob 5, the most common word for comparisons is *mashal*—a word from a root meaning “to liken,” literally translated as “saying” or “comparison.” As one scholar noted, “No distinction is made in biblical usage between parable, allegory, and fable; all are forms of the *mashal* and have the same functions of illustration and instruction.”¹ In addition, there is a word for riddle in biblical Hebrew, *ḥidah*, which indicates a figure of comparison in which the point is deliberately obscured, as in Samson’s riddle (Judges 14:14) and in the allegory of the eagles and the vine (Ezekiel 17:3–10), which is described both as a *mashal* as well as a *ḥidah*. Just because ancient terms were not as precise as modern terms does not mean that categories such as those described by modern literary scholars did not exist, but it is important that the modern interpreter approach an ancient text without preconceived notions imposed by modern labels.

Many examples of figurative language do not fall into neat categories. For example, many extended comparisons

in the Bible share the characteristics of several of the figures or genres, and scholars argue exactly how to classify certain passages. Isaiah's song of the vineyard in 5:1–7 is an explicit comparison of Israel to a vineyard: "For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel" (Isaiah 5:7)—which, incidentally, manifests many similarities to Zenos's comparison of Israel to an olive tree. Scholars have variously argued that it is a fable, a parable, or an allegory.² Because the vineyard is personified in Isaiah some have argued that it is a fable. Others emphasize the elements of a parable—a naturalistic story of a man who finally allows his unproductive vineyard to be destroyed, the single lesson of the comparison being if Israel does not repent they will be destroyed. Still others have developed an allegorical interpretation, finding a counterpart for each of the elements of the story: the planting of the vineyard as God planting Israel in Canaan, the protection of the vineyard as angels, the tower as the temple, the wine vat as altar, and bad grapes as sin.³ Obviously, in biblical Hebrew these categories are not mutually exclusive and a conscientious interpretation of figurative language must take into account many possibilities.

Jacob 5 also contains elements of several of these figures. It is a simile in that it is introduced as such, "I will liken thee, O house of Israel like unto a tame olive-tree" (Jacob 5:3). It has characteristics of a parable in that it is introduced as having a single message that transcends the details of the story. Jacob introduces the story as an exposition of a mystery: "How is it possible that these [the Jews], after having rejected the sure foundation, can ever build upon it, that it may become the head of their corner?" (Jacob 4:17). It is an allegory in that throughout the extended narrative we find many details that lend themselves well to an

interpretation involving a one-to-one correspondence with people, places, and events in the history of the scattering and gathering of Israel.

The allegory of the olive tree in Jacob 5 is designated in the Book of Mormon as “the words of the prophet Zenos” (Jacob 5:1)—the word *allegory* doesn’t occur in the Book of Mormon. Nevertheless, the intricacy of the details in Zenos’s prophecy and in Jacob’s interpretation in Jacob 6 suggests it is to be read as an allegory, and since the publication of the Book of Mormon most have interpreted it as such, assigning each of the details to a particular people, period of time, or event in the history of the scattering and gathering of Israel.⁴ Clearly this is one of the ways it is meant to be read, though it is interesting to note that there remains no consensus among interpreters on several of the details of the passage, most notably the time periods of the various scenes.⁵

Considering the lack of distinction between a parable and an allegory in biblical terminology, it is worth examining Zenos’s prophecy as a parable, looking for the larger lesson beyond the identification of each specific transplanted branch, period of grafting, and spot in the vineyard. John Tanner observed:

We often pay so much attention to what Zenos has told us about the history of Israel that we miss the powerful message that likely drew Jacob to the allegory: namely, that God loves and looks after the house of Israel, no matter where its people are scattered. The allegory is more than a complex puzzle whose solution unlocks world history, as some of us read it. The allegory also dramatizes God’s steadfast love and active concern. Zenos’s allegory ought to take its place beside the parable of the prodigal son. Both stories make the Lord’s mercy so movingly memorable.⁶

Following Jacob's introduction to Zenos's allegory as an exposition of the mystery of the rejection of Christ as the foundation stone, Catherine Thomas reads the allegory as a symbolic description of the main features of the atonement:

This ceaseless divine activity in seeking to bring men into his presence, even while they still walk on the earth, is the meaning behind the continual nourishing, digging, and pruning going on in the allegorical vineyard. . . . The perfect knowledge of Christ that Jacob refers to (Jacob 4:14), that is, at-one-ment with him, is achieved in Christ's revelation of himself through the pruning, digging, and nourishing of his individual covenant children.⁷

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

When one compares Zenos's allegory with ancient Near Eastern and Old Testament literary traditions it is immediately apparent that Jacob 5 is a unique and extraordinary narrative. There is no other allegory anywhere in the ancient world that is anything like it in terms of length, scope, detail, or span of history until the Hellenistic period. While it is not possible to date Zenos's allegory with certainty, it is clearly to be dated before 600 B.C. since it was found on the brass plates brought by Lehi and his family from Jerusalem.⁸ Therefore this examination will limit itself to examples from the ancient Near East before 600 B.C. and those contained in the Old Testament through Ezekiel.

While there are no examples of an allegory of the magnitude of Jacob 5 in the ancient Near East, there are many examples of figurative narratives of a similar genre. Perhaps the closest parallels to Zenos's allegory in the ancient Near East are found in a corpus of Sumerian fables or contest literature also preserved in Akkadian. This contest literature

consists of verbal debates between animals, plants, or other personifications. At stake are their respective merits and values for society: thus winter versus summer, silver versus bronze, the axe versus the plow, the tamarisk versus the palm, the grain versus the wheat, and the ox versus the horse.⁹ These fables were written expressly for the kings and were recited in the court of the kings either as praise or condemnation of the king and his court or simply as entertainment.¹⁰ A later Babylonian example of this genre is the contest between the tamarisk and the palm tree in which each first extols, then argues the usefulness and value of its own fruit to society.¹¹

Scholars have noted that most of these fables follow a stock pattern: (1) A mythological introduction, which gives the cosmological *raison d'être* of the conflicting parties. (2) A dispute, in which the opposing parties boast of their own superior functions and degrade the other. (3) An appeal to deity, who renders a decision and reconciles the disputants.¹²

Because of the aspect of judgment characteristic of this corpus of fables, at least one scholar has seen the song of the vineyard in Isaiah 5:1–7 as an example of this genre of contest literature.¹³ In Isaiah 5 the Lord calls for judgment of his unproductive vineyard, “And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?” (Isaiah 5:3–4).

Similarly, while the allegory of the olive tree does not exactly fit the pattern of contest literature, it does have some points of similarity. It can be seen as a contest between a man and his olive trees with a mythological introduction consisting of the tame olive tree growing old and decaying. The dispute is the various attempts to get good fruit, and

finally the judgment consists of the destruction of the vineyard after the final harvest. The Lord, in Jacob 5:47, echoes a similar call for judgment as in Isaiah 5:4, "But what could I have done more in my vineyard? Have I slackened mine hand, that I have not nourished it?" In both the song of the vineyard and the allegory of the olive tree, the vineyard is ultimately destroyed (Isaiah 5:6–7; Jacob 5:77).

Another of these contest fables with a theme much like that of the song of the vineyard and the allegory of the olive tree is that of Nisaba, the Sumerian wheat goddess and the wheat. The text is fragmentary but from what can be reconstructed there is a conflict between the goddess and the wheat, which results in apparent judgment upon the wheat, the victory of Nisaba, and an assurance of future fertility and productivity.¹⁴ This fable has been compared to the song of the vineyard especially as it notes the importance of rain that will come through Nisaba—in Isaiah 5 the Lord commands the clouds that they withhold rain from the unproductive vineyard (Isaiah 5:6).¹⁵

Elsewhere there is much tree imagery in ancient Near Eastern literature on the level of a simple simile or metaphor. As examples we will look at only a couple of typical extended comparisons. Akkadian proverbs often contain tree imagery:

You are placed into a river and your water becomes at
once stinking;
you are placed in an orchard and your date-fruit becomes
bitter.

If the shoot is not right it will not produce the stalk, nor
create seed.

Will ripe grain grow? How do we know?
Will dried grain grow? How do we know?¹⁶

In the Egyptian *Teaching of Amenemope*, dated between the tenth and the sixth centuries B.C., a man who cannot control his temper is compared with one who has self-control, in a simile of trees:

As for the heated man of a temple,
 He is like a tree growing in the open.
 In the completion of a moment (comes) its loss of foliage,
 And its end is reached in the shipyards;
 (Or) it is floated far from its place,
 And the flame is its burial shroud.
 (But) the truly silent man holds himself apart.
 He is like a tree growing in a garden.
 It flourishes and doubles its yield;
 It (stands) before its lord.
 Its fruit is sweet; its shade is pleasant;
 And its end is reached in the garden.¹⁷

It is interesting to note that the value of the tree, just as in Jacob 5, is judged not only by the quantity of its fruit but also by the quality of the fruit (Jacob 5:17–18, 20).

Homer is also fond of tree imagery, particularly in his similes describing death. The simile in Homer is a common device in which a scene of human drama is compared with a scene from nature. It is argued that this device is used in epic for emphasis and vividness and also to control the tempo of the narrative.¹⁸ Let us look at one example in the *Iliad*, where the Trojan Euphorbus is about to be killed by Menelaus:

And as a man reareth a lusty sapling of an olive
 in a lonely place, where water wellet up abundantly
 —a goodly sapling and a fair-growing;
 and the blasts of all the winds make it to quiver,
 and it burgeoneth out with white blossoms;
 but suddenly cometh the wind with a mighty tempest,
 and teareth it out of its trench, and layeth it low
 upon the earth;

even in such a wise did Menelaus, son of Atreus, slay
Panthous' son, Euphorbus of the good ashen spear, and
set him to spoil him of his armour.

(*Iliad* 17:53–60, translation A. T. Murray)

It is worth noting that the image of the shoot of an olive planted by rivers of water is an image also known from the Old Testament (Psalm 1:3), and, just as the tree falls in this simile, so the entire vineyard will be burned at the end of Zenos's allegory. Several other similar examples occur in the *Iliad* in 4:482–87; 13:178–81, 389–93; 16:482–86. Zenos may or may not be drawing on other ancient traditions for his imagery, but these diverse examples do show the common accessibility of the imagery of trees, planting, grafting, fruitfulness, and harvest to a people who lived in a similar Mediterranean environment and who therefore experienced and appreciated trees, in particular the olive tree, in much the same way.

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN THE BIBLE

The Old Testament contains many examples of comparisons both at the simple level of simile and metaphor as well as at the extended level of parables, allegories, fables, and riddles. For example, there is the fable of the trees and the bramble (Judges 9:7–21); Samson's riddle of the lion (Judges 14:14); Nathan's parable of the poor man and his lamb (2 Samuel 12:1–6); the parable of the escaped prisoner (1 Kings 20:39–40); and the song of the vineyard (Isaiah 5:1–7). Also to be included are the dreams of Joseph (Genesis 37:6–11) and the Pharaoh (Genesis 41:1–8) and the various visions in Daniel.

Much of the figurative language of the Old Testament involves metaphors describing Israel and her relationship with God. Perhaps the most pervasive metaphor is that

which compares the covenant to a marriage—the Lord being the groom and Israel the bride: “For thy Maker is thine husband” (Isaiah 54:5); “Thus saith the Lord; I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness” (Jeremiah 2:2; cf. Ezekiel 16:1–14; Hosea 1-3). In this extended metaphor, Sinai represents the marriage ceremony while Israel’s constant unfaithfulness to God is described as adultery. This metaphor illustrates the love and tenderness of the relationship, the expectation of trust and fidelity, and the severe consequences of unfaithfulness, which are variously described as separation or divorce.

Also prominent is the comparison of Israel as a plant and the Lord as the gardener: “Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance” (Exodus 15:17); “As the trees of lign aloes which the Lord hath planted, and as cedar trees beside the waters” (Numbers 24:6); “Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them” (2 Samuel 7:10); “For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant” (Isaiah 5:7); “The Lord called thy name, A green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit” (Jeremiah 11:16); “And I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul” (Jeremiah 23:41). This agricultural metaphor emphasizes the dependence of Israel on her God, the care which he gives to his plants, and the expectation of productivity measured by the quality and quantity of the fruit at the harvest. Clearly the closest parallel to Zenos’s allegory is found in Isaiah’s song of the vineyard (Isaiah 5:1–7) where Israel is compared with an unproductive vineyard that the Lord attempts to make fruitful but finally allows to be destroyed by its enemies and lack of rain.

In the Bible, allegories are most characteristic of the writings of Ezekiel where Israel is compared to various things. Ezekiel first compares Israel to a useless vine whose wood is good only for the fire (Ezekiel 15); then he presents the allegory of the three harlot sisters, which follows the metaphor of the covenant as marriage (Ezekiel 16). Elsewhere he portrays Israel as a cedar tree, in the eagle and the cedar tree (Ezekiel 17), and a lioness and her cubs (Ezekiel 19). Tree imagery is found in the passage in which he compares Assyria and Egypt to the tallest cedar (Ezekiel 31). The height and grandeur of the cedar are symbolic of Assyria and Egypt's pride, and because of their pride it is they, the tallest tree, who fall and are cast down to Sheol (cf. "loftiness," Jacob 5:48). Herodotus, writing more than a century later in Athens, also used this same figure when Artabanus advises Xerxes the Great that the tallest tree attracts the wrath of the gods.¹⁹

Just as the word *liken* occurs in Jacob 5 where the Lord says, "I will liken thee, O house of Israel, like unto a tame olive-tree" (Jacob 5:3), so many of the comparisons in biblical usage involving tree or plant imagery are also introduced by the words *like*, *liken*, and *as*. For example, Psalm 52:8, "I am like a green olive tree in the house of God"; Jeremiah 17:8, "He shall be as a tree planted by the waters"; Psalm 1:3, "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season"; Psalm 92:12-13, "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that he planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God"; and Psalm 128:3, "Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table."

Besides the allegory of the olive tree, the most extensive

allegory found in scripture, though not in the Old Testament, is the vision of the tree of life, which is presented twice in 1 Nephi—once to Lehi (1 Nephi 8) and once to Nephi (1 Nephi 11–14)—and is interpreted for Nephi (1 Nephi 11–14). Many elements of this allegory may be compared to those in Jacob 5, such as the tree of life, the importance of the fruit, the concern of the Lord, and the rebellion of many of his children. Another important allegory in the Book of Mormon using plant imagery is the allegory of the seed in Alma 32.

CONCLUSIONS

The prophecy of Zenos in Jacob 5 is a sophisticated extended comparison using elements of simile, metaphor, parable, and allegory. Modern terms defining these figures are more precise than the ancient terms; hence Jacob 5 can best be described as an allegory containing a history of the scattering and gathering of Israel, though it can also be read as a parable of the love of God. While Jacob 5 is unique in its sophistication, there is evidence in the ancient Near East that Zenos's allegory of the olive tree does not come out of a vacuum. There are other known examples in ancient Near Eastern literature of extended comparisons such as fables, parables, and perhaps even allegories, but there is nothing of the length and scope of Jacob 5. In addition, the allegory of the olive tree relies on common comparisons known elsewhere, which are easily understood by people who are closely connected with agriculture in terms of tree and plant husbandry, productivity, and harvesting.

Comparative examples from the ancient Near East and specifically from the Old Testament serve to provide background for a reading of Zenos's allegory of the olive tree and provide some understanding as to its ancient context.

Similarities can be found in imagery, language, and function. A comparison with ancient traditions, however, highlights the uniqueness of "the words of the prophet Zenos." The allegory of the olive tree transcends any allegory from a comparable time period in terms of length, scope, detail, and span of history. It is an extraordinary piece of ancient Near Eastern literature, not rivaled by any narrative in the Old Testament in terms of its intricacy.

After Jacob recounted the words of Zenos he testified, "The things which this prophet Zenos spake, concerning the house of Israel, in the which he likened them unto a tame olive-tree, must surely come to pass" (Jacob 6:1). In light of this testimony the meaning of the allegory of the olive tree is important to Israel and to all the inhabitants of the world. Its minute details challenge us and yet its clear message of the constant care of the Lord for his vineyard moves us. We are blessed to have it.

Notes

I wish to thank Anthony Rivera, my research assistant, for his help in the research of this paper.

1. R. B. Y. Scott, "Parable," in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1971), 13:72. For useful articles on biblical figures of comparison, s.v. "Allegory," "Fable," "Parable," and "Proverb," in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*; and *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1962), four volumes with Supplementary Volume (1976).

2. For details see John T. Willis, "The Genre of Isaiah 5:1-7," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 96 (1977): 337-62. Willis states, "Critical divergences on this issue are due basically to the interpretation of the biblical text and/or to the definition of a particular genre" (337). Willis discusses scholarly views that variously argue for many more additional genres than those mentioned above: uncle's song, satirical polemic, prophet's song concerning his own vineyard, prophet's song expressing sympathy for Yahweh, drinking song, bride's love song, groom's love song, song of the friend of the bridegroom, a lawsuit or accusation. Willis proposes classifying this pericope as a parable of a disappointed husbandman.

3. Willis, "The Genre of Isaiah 5:1–7," 355.
4. For a review of the interpretations of Jacob 5, see Noel B. Reynolds, "Nephite Interpretations of Zenos"; Grant Underwood, "Jacob 5 in the Nineteenth Century"; and Paul Y. Hoskisson, "An Allegory for Our Day," in this volume.
5. Paul Y. Hoskisson, "Explicating the Mystery of the Rejected Foundation Stone: The Allegory of the Olive Tree," *BYU Studies* 30/3 (1990): 77.
6. John S. Tanner, "Jacob and His Descendants as Authors," in John L. Sorenson and Melvin J. Thorne, eds., *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1991), 61.
7. M. Catherine Thomas, "Jacob's Allegory: The Mystery of Christ," in this volume.
8. According to the Book of Mormon, Zenos is to be dated somewhere between Abraham (Helaman 8:19–20) and about 600 B.C. when the Lehitites left Jerusalem. For a discussion of the possible date of Zenos and the allegory of the olive tree, see David Rolph Seely and John W. Welch, "Zenos and the Texts of the Old Testament," in this volume.
9. The Sumerian contest fables can be found in J. J. A. Van Dijk, *La sagesse sumero-accadienne* (Leiden: Brill, 1953), 31–85. Remains of six Babylonian examples can be found in W. G. Lambert, *Babylonian Wisdom Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960), 150–212.
10. Lambert, *Babylonian Wisdom Literature*, 150; Willis, "The Genre of Isaiah 5:1–7," 352.
11. Lambert, *Babylonian Wisdom Literature*, 151–64. This text can also be found in James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 3d ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 410–11.
12. Willis, "The Genre of Isaiah 5:1–7," 353. Willis is summarizing Willy Schottroff, "Das Weinberglied Jesajas (Jes 5:1–7)," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 82 (1970): 86–87.
13. Schottroff, "Das Weinberglied," 68–91.
14. The Babylonian version of the text is collated in Lambert, *Babylonian Wisdom Literature*, 168–75.
15. See Willis, "The Genre of Isaiah 5:1–7," 352–53, and Schottroff, "Das Weinberglied," 86–88.
16. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 425. Some of this imagery is interesting in light of the allegory of the seed in Alma 32.
17. *Ibid.*, 422.
18. See Martin Mueller, "The Simile," in Harold Bloom, ed., *Modern Critical Views: Homer* (New York: Chelsea House, 1986),

217–31, and David Marshall, “Similes and Delay,” in Bloom, *Homer*, 233–36.

19. “You see how the god smites with his thunderbolt creatures of greatness more than common, nor suffers them to display their pride, but such as are little move him not to anger; and you see how it is ever on the tallest buildings and trees that this bolt falls; for it is heaven’s way to bring low all things of surpassing bigness” (Herodotus, VII, 10, translation A. D. Godley).

13

The Last Words of Cenez and the Book of Mormon

John W. Welch

A Hebrew text, most likely written as early as the time of Christ and possibly containing materials that are considerably older, gives an alternative history of the Jews from the creation of the world to the time of King David. The work has survived in several Latin manuscripts; the Latin is a translation of a Greek translation of the original Hebrew.¹ Virtually unknown until the late nineteenth century, the work has been called *Biblical Antiquities* or *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, and an English translation is most readily available in Charlesworth's *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*.² Its unknown author is called Pseudo-Philo because the work was fortuitously collected long ago among a number of manuscripts containing the writings of Philo of Alexandria.

In part of this history, the unknown author tells of a great prophet-warrior-leader (briefly mentioned in the Bible where he is named Kenaz; see Joshua 15:17; Judges 1:13; 3:9; 1 Chronicles 4:13, 15). According to this text, Kenaz succeeded Joshua and became the next judge in Israel. The precise spelling of this man's name is obscure: in one Latin manuscript it is Cenez; in another, Zenec; and in a third, Zenez. Daniel J. Harrington, translator of the text in Charlesworth's *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, spells the name as Kenaz. Traditions about him were well enough

known that he is mentioned by Josephus, who knew him as Keniazos.³ I will call him Cenez, following the principal Latin manuscript.

The main question I wish to explore is how Cenez and his story compare with Book of Mormon figures such as Zenos and Zenoch and their writings. Details in this section of the *Pseudo-Philo* conform closely enough to the materials in Jacob 4–6 that one must wonder about the possibility that Jacob knew either the story of Cenez or another account similar to it.

THE CENEZ EPISODE AND JACOB 4–6

According to *Pseudo-Philo*, Cenez ruled the Israelites for fifty-seven years. During his lifetime he purged his people by burning all of the self-confessing covenant breakers. Then he went forth to protect his people by single-handedly wielding a sword that shone like a lightning bolt in vanquishing a large army of Amorites.

When the time came for him to die, Cenez called his people together in a large assembly, reminiscent of several similar assemblies convened late in life by Book of Mormon leaders. Cenez told his audience what the Lord was prepared to do for his people in the last days. At this assembly, like King Benjamin in Mosiah 5, Cenez renewed God's covenant with the Israelites, and his priest Phinehas revealed to the people sacred things that had been shown to Phinehas's father in a dream by night (cf. also Mosiah 3:2).

While this entire episode of covenant-renewal is of interest to students of the Book of Mormon, I will focus here only on the allegory of the vineyard given by God to Phinehas's father, for it compares significantly with Zenos's

allegory as well as with Jacob's surrounding introduction and commentary in Jacob 4 and 6.

The relevant portion of the Old World text reads:

And when the days of Kenaz drew near for him to die, he sent and summoned all of them and Jabis and Phinehas the two prophets and Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and he said to them, "Behold now the Lord has shown to me all his wonders that he is ready to do for his people in the last days. And now I will establish my covenant with you today [*disponam testamentum meum vobiscum hodie*] so that you do not abandon the Lord your God after my departure. For you have seen all the wonders that came upon those who sinned and what they declared in confessing their sins voluntarily, or how the Lord our God destroyed them because they transgressed against his covenant. Now therefore spare those of your household and your children, and stay in the paths of the Lord your God lest the Lord destroy his own inheritance."

And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said, "If Kenaz the leader and the prophets and the elders command it, I will speak the word that I heard from my father when he was dying, and I will not be silent about the command that he commanded me while his soul was being taken away."

And Kenaz the leader and the prophets said, "Speak, Phinehas. Should anyone speak before the priest who guards the commandments of the Lord our God, especially since truth goes forth from his mouth and a shining light from his heart?"

And then Phinehas said, "While my father was dying, he commanded me, saying,

'These words you will say to the sons of Israel':

When you were gathered together in the assembly, the Lord appeared to me three days ago in a dream by night and said to me, "Behold you have seen and also your father before you *how*

much I have toiled among my people. But after your death this people will rise up and corrupt its ways and turn from my commands, and I will be very angry with them. But I will recall that time that was before the creation of the world, the time when man did not exist and there was no wickedness in it, when I said that the world would be created and those who would come into it would praise me. And I would plant a great vineyard [plantabo mihi vineam grandem], and from it I would choose a plant [de ea eligam plantationem]; and I would care for it [disponam eam] and call it by my name, and it would be mine forever. When I did all the things that I said, nevertheless my plant that was called by my name did not recognize me as its planter, but it destroyed its own fruit [corrumpet fructum suum] and did not yield up its fruit to me [did not bring forth its fruit; non proferat fructum eius]." ' '

And this is what my father commanded me to say to this people."

And Kenaz and the elders and all the people lifted up their voices and wept [with one accord, *unanimiter*] with great lamentation until evening and said, "Will the Shepherd destroy his flock for any reason except that it has sinned against him? And now he is the one who will spare us according to the abundance of his mercy, because he has toiled so much among us."

And when they had sat down, a holy spirit [*spiritus sanctus*] came upon Kenaz and dwelled in him and put him in ecstasy, and he began to prophesy, saying, "Behold now I see what I had not hoped for, and I perceive that I did not understand. Hear now, you who dwell on the earth, just as those staying a while on it prophesied before me and saw this hour [*commorantes in ea prophetaverunt ante me videntes horam hanc*] even before the earth was corrupted, so all of you who dwell in it may know the prophecies that have been fixed in advance [*predestinatas prophetationes*]."

Several similarities can be observed between the account of Cenez and the words of Jacob and Zenos in Jacob 4–6:

1. Cenez's farewell assembly occurred at a time when it was "near for him to die." Similarly, Jacob evidently wrote Jacob 4–6 toward the end of his life, as he reflected on his own ministry and writings (Jacob 4:1–3) and bade his people "farewell" (Jacob 6:13).⁴ Furthermore, beginning with Jacob 5:1, it appears that Jacob's farewell record consists mainly of words that he delivered orally to a Nephite assembly, for he speaks directly to his "brethren" (Jacob 5:1; 6:1, 5, 11) in the second person ("you" or "ye," Jacob 4:18; 5:1; 6:1, 5–13); presumably they were listening to him speak that day (Jacob 6:6).

2. Cenez announced his purpose: to tell what the Lord had shown to him, particularly all the Lord's wonders and what he was prepared to do for his people "in the last days." Jacob also prophesied ("I said unto you that I would prophesy, behold, this is my prophecy," Jacob 6:1) what will happen when the Lord sets his hand "the second time to recover his people, . . . even the last time" (Jacob 6:2).

3. Cenez then instructed Phinehas to tell the assembly the words of his dying father, Eleazar, in order to encourage the sons of Israel to "stay in the paths of the Lord," for otherwise God will destroy them "because they transgressed against his covenant." Likewise, Jacob quoted the words of Zenos about the allegory of the olive tree to encourage his people to be "reconciled unto [the Lord] through the atonement of Christ" (Jacob 4:11), to show that God will remember his covenant people (Jacob 6:4), and to warn them that they will be utterly destroyed unless they "continue in the way which is narrow" (Jacob 6:7–11).

4. Phinehas had been commanded by his father to

reveal these things to Israel at a special time when the people were “gathered together in the assembly.” Otherwise, Phinehas was to remain silent about this revelation until commanded to speak. Similarly, Jacob held off in giving the interpretation of the “mystery” of the olive tree until the closing hour of his ministry, and he experienced considerable anxiety in unfolding this sacred information to his people (Jacob 4:18).⁵ In addition, the command of Eleazar was given by a father to his son: Eleazar entrusted his son with sacred knowledge to be preserved and transmitted to subsequent generations. Commands from fathers to sons also figure prominently in the protection and transmission of sacred knowledge in the Book of Mormon (for example, Jacob 1:2–3; 7:27).

5. The words of the Lord to Eleazar began by acknowledging how much the Lord had toiled among his people. Likewise, the allegory in Jacob 5 tells repeatedly how the Lord worked many long seasons to nourish and cultivate his beloved olive tree and how his servants also labored diligently to make it productive (see Jacob 5:25, 51, 61).

6. Eleazar referred back to the creation of the world, giving his message an eternal and permanent dimension: “I will recall that time that was before the creation of the world, . . . when I said that the world would be created.” Similarly, the allegory of Zenos uses words and phrases that can be recognized as possible allusions to the creation accounts in Genesis or the book of Abraham: for example, “and he beheld that it was good” (Jacob 5:17, 20; Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25), “be one” (Jacob 5:68; Genesis 2:24), “let us go down” (Jacob 5:15, 29, 38; Genesis 11:7; Abraham 4:1, 26), and from “the beginning” (Jacob 5:74; Genesis 1:1).

7. Eleazar was next told that, despite the Lord’s work, the people of Israel would rise up and become corrupt. The

decaying of the tree and the corruption of the fruit is mentioned several times in Jacob 5 (see 5:3, 39, 42, 46–48).

8. To this the Lord exclaimed, “And I will be very angry with them.” Indeed, in Zenos’s allegory, the Lord at one point was virtually overcome with grief and had determined to destroy the entire vineyard: “Let us go to and hew down the trees of the vineyard and cast them into the fire” (Jacob 5:49).

9. But the Lord promised Eleazar that he will, at that point, reconsider. At this same point of grief, the servant of the Lord in Jacob 5 prevailed upon the Lord to “spare it a little longer” (Jacob 5:50).

10. Next Eleazar was told how God’s plan was to plant a great vineyard and choose a particular plant that would become special to him. God would care for it and call it by his name and it would be his forever. These words are echoed in Jacob 5 with the Lord’s tender love for his precious tree (Jacob 5:4, 7, 11, 13, 32) and his desire to lay up fruit “against the season” (Jacob 5:76).

11. As in the allegory of the olive tree in Jacob 5, Eleazar was also told, however, that the plant would not yield up fruit to God because it would not recognize God as its planter and would destroy its own fruit. Jacob prophesied, in a similar manner, that the Jews would not recognize the prophets (Jacob 4:14) and that they would reject Christ (Jacob 4:15), and because of their own desires they would cause themselves to stumble.

12. After hearing these troubling words, the people of Cenez lifted up their voices with one accord (*unanimiter*) to plead with the good shepherd to admit their guilt and ask him to preserve his flock (cf. Mosiah 4:2). In particular they threw themselves upon the Lord’s mercy, knowing that he loved them because he had toiled so much among them. The

same result was on Jacob's mind: "How merciful is our God unto us, for he remembereth the house of Israel, both roots and branches; and he stretches forth his hands unto them all the day long; . . . Wherefore, my beloved brethren, I beseech of you in words of soberness that ye would repent, . . . and while his arm of mercy is extended towards you in the light of the day, harden not your hearts" (Jacob 6:4–5).

13. On seeing the repentant attitude of his people, Cenez was filled with the Holy Ghost and he prophesied to all people who dwell on earth, affirming that all prophets who have ever pondered this point have seen "this hour" and have known the future as set forth in God's plan of salvation. Jacob also emphasized this precise point, stating that "all the holy prophets which were before us" knew of Christ and had a hope of his glory (Jacob 4:4). "Behold, we are not witnesses alone in these things; for God also spake them unto prophets of old" (Jacob 4:13).

Some of the foregoing similarities may be coincidental and unremarkable, but taken together they form an impressive and noteworthy array. Together, these items point consistently to the probability of some relationship between the two texts. Given the Palestinian provenance of the *Pseudo-Philo*,⁶ these similarities corroborate the Hebrew origins of the allegory of the olive tree in Jacob 5. Furthermore, the fact that the Cenez episode has close affinities not only with Zenos's allegory but also with the thematic settings in which Jacob quotes Zenos leads even more distinctly to the position that Jacob 4–6 was patterned after *Pseudo-Philo* 25–28 or some other very similar Hebrew source.

IS IT POSSIBLE THAT CENEZ WAS ZENOS OR ZENOCH?

In *Since Cumorah* and in several firesides given in the

1960s,⁷ Hugh Nibley referred to the rediscovery in the 1890s of the Jewish stories about Cenez in *Pseudo-Philo*. He strongly suggested that there might be some connection between (1) Cenez, (2) the author of the Thanksgiving Hymns from Qumran, and (3) the Book of Mormon prophet Zenos (also variously spelled as Zenoz and Zenas⁸). Despite the similarities of name and of obvious details, it seems to me that *Pseudo-Philo's* Cenez cannot be the same person as the Book of Mormon Zenos. Cenez is depicted as a very powerful and popular leader who successfully suppressed dissidents, as one who instilled "fear among all his enemies all his days" (27:16), and who died in peace at an old age (28:1, 10). The Book of Mormon reports, however, that Zenos was beleaguered, unpopular (Alma 33:10), and "did testify boldly; for the which he was slain" (Helaman 8:19).

Zenos is quoted quite extensively in the Book of Mormon, but outside of Jacob 5 little connection can be drawn between the known words of Zenos and the account of Cenez. Alma 33:4–11 gives part of a thanksgiving hymn by Zenos blessing God for hearing his prayer and visiting his enemies "in [God's] anger with speedy destruction . . . because of [His] son." Zenos also spoke "concerning the three days of darkness, which should be a sign given of [Jesus's] death unto those who should inhabit the isles of the sea" (1 Nephi 19:10). Neither of these details are found in the account of Cenez.

It also seems unlikely that Cenez was the prophet known to Book of Mormon writers as Zenoch (the name is spelled *Zenoch* in the Original Manuscript, as Royal Skousen has pointed out⁹). Despite the fact that the name Cenez is Zenec in one of the manuscripts of *Pseudo-Philo*,¹⁰ the Book of Mormon indicates that Zenoch was stoned for his prophesying.¹¹ Moreover, Cenez was of the tribe of Caleb

(apparently of the tribe of Judah), while Zenoch was of the tribe of Joseph (3 Nephi 10:16–17). Thus an identity here is also unlikely.

Zenoch is quoted twice in the Book of Mormon. He prophesied that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would “be lifted up” (1 Nephi 19:10), which Nephi understood as a prophecy about the suffering of the Messiah. Second, he is quoted as having said, “Thou art angry, O Lord, with this people, because they will not understand thy mercies which thou hast bestowed upon them because of thy Son” (Alma 33:16). Zenoch’s words were used to add collateral support to the messianic prophecies of Nephi, Zenos, and others (1 Nephi 19:10; Alma 33:15; 34:7; Helaman 8:19), but one can only assume that the prophecies of Zenoch in this regard were no more specific than is indicated in these faint references, for otherwise Nephi and Alma would have quoted the more explicit language. Thus, we know that Zenoch prophesied (1) that God would be “lifted up” (“exalted”? “set upon a pole” as in Numbers 21:8?, or “hung on a tree” as in Deuteronomy 21:22?); (2) that God had or would have a “son” (“Jesus”? an “anointed one”? “the king”? cf. Psalms 2:6–7); (3) that mercy would come through that son (cf. “kiss the Son [for example, the anointed king of Israel] . . . Blessed are all they that put their trust in him,” Psalms 2:12); and (4) that God would be angry because the people would not understand his mercies unto them (cf. Jacob 4:14). But beyond this, the surviving Zenoch material does not extend.

Although the genealogy of Zenoch and the deaths of Zenos and Zenoch, coupled with the dearth of other information about these two figures, make it impossible to identify either of them with Cenez, a case can be made establishing indirect or somewhat removed connections between

Cenez and the Book of Mormon prophets Zenos and Zenoah. Most notable is the allegory of the vineyard given in Cenez's account. As in Jacob 5, the plant forgets God, its planter, and corrupts its fruit, and its destruction is foretold. On hearing this allegory, Cenez and his elders "lift up" their voices and weep until evening, saying, "Will the Shepherd destroy his flock? . . . He is the one who will spare us according to the abundance of his mercy" (28:5); similarly, Zenos praised God specifically for his mercies (Alma 33:11, 16). Likewise, God came swiftly to the aid of Cenez to destroy his enemies (*Pseudo-Philo* 27:1–14), upon which Cenez's people exclaimed, "Now we know that the Lord has decided to save his people; he does not need a great number but only holiness" (*Pseudo-Philo* 27:14), and Zenos thanked God for visiting his enemies "in [His] anger with speedy destruction" (Alma 33:10). Furthermore, those who will be saved, according to Cenez, are those who will have the correct name (*Pseudo-Philo* 28:9; cf. Mosiah 5:8–12). These and other similarities constitute a substantial series of correlations between the Book of Mormon Zenos and the Cenez of *Pseudo-Philo*. It is possible, then, to assume that the words of Cenez, Phinehas, or Eleazar, or traditional words like them, were known in pre-exilic Israel by the Book of Mormon Zenos, who drew upon those words or reflected similar backgrounds as he composed his writings.

WAS A HISTORY OF CENEZ ON THE PLATES OF BRASS?

Other similarities between the episode of Cenez and Jacob 4–6 raise the further question: Could a history of Cenez, or something like chapters 25–28 in *Pseudo-Philo*, have been found by Jacob among the records contained on the plates of brass? The Book of Mormon description of the

writings on the brass plates does not exclude this possibility. Those plates contained “an account of the creation of the world . . . And also a record of the Jews from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah” (1 Nephi 5:11–12), and that account was fuller than the biblical account (1 Nephi 13:23). Pseudo-Philo’s *Biblical Antiquities* basically fits Lehi’s description of the plates of brass. *Pseudo-Philo* recounts the history of the world and of Israel from the creation down to the time of King David, and it tells several stories not found in the Bible. At a minimum, the *Pseudo-Philo* is a concrete example showing at least that such an alternative history existed among the Jews. Moreover, this possibility gains some corroboration from a few striking nonbiblical parallels between the affairs of Cenez and historiographic materials also emphasized in the Nephite record.¹² These points are not conclusive, but they provide clues that Book of Mormon peoples may have known of an account of Cenez or something much like it.¹³

Of course, it is not likely that the surviving version of *Pseudo-Philo* known to the world today is exactly the same as “the account” known to Lehi and his posterity. Scholarly opinion usually dates writing of the *Pseudo-Philo* to the first century A.D., and this makes it impossible to ascribe the present form of this work to pre-exilic Israelite times. Nevertheless, scholarly opinion does not preclude an association of much of this material with things in the Book of Mormon, for many of the traditions and basic ideas reflected in *Pseudo-Philo* are older than the time when they were finally written down in their present form.

Moreover, while the extant Latin versions of *Pseudo-Philo* are obviously late translations from a Greek version of this text, scholars agree that *Pseudo-Philo* was originally written in Hebrew and in Palestine. Since the Hebrew orig-

inal does not exist, it is difficult to say much about when it may have been written,¹⁴ and there is little in *Pseudo-Philo* to date it contextually. Several of its main features are consistent with the idea that its distant roots reach back into pre-exilic times. For example, its content is unaffected by the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem. It is uninfluenced by the priestly code or priestly writers.¹⁵ Cohn observes that "Christian elements are entirely absent" here;¹⁶ the text "belongs to the oldest specimens of historic Hagada."¹⁷ Cohn concludes that "there were ancient legends, which were used by Pseudo-Philo, and also served as the foundation of stories in the Midrash,"¹⁸ and that "Pseudo-Philo's version of Jewish history has many roots in the ancient Jewish traditions and legends on which the Hagadah and the Midrash are founded."¹⁹ Thus the possibility cannot be ruled out that these traditions existed in some written form in Lehi's day, although this cannot be proved or disproved.

The main passage used by scholars to date *Pseudo-Philo* to a time shortly after the destruction of the Second Temple in A.D. 70 is *Pseudo-Philo* 19:7. Here the text discusses the temple of Solomon and prophecies that the temple will be destroyed on the same day of the year on which the tablets of the law had been destroyed by Moses, namely the seventeenth day of Tammuz. But since the fall of Jerusalem in the sixth century B.C came on the ninth of Tamuz (Jeremiah 52:6; 2 Kings 25:3), Cohn concludes that *Pseudo-Philo* must have gotten confused and mentioned the seventeenth day of Tammuz because he knew it as the fateful day on which the Second Temple of Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, a date recorded in the Talmud. This one point is thought to betray the complete work as a late first-century writing.

That reasoning, however, is not very convincing, since

Nebuchadnezzar's soldiers could easily have taken eight days to destroy the temple of Solomon. Accordingly, Harrington remains unpersuaded: "Close inspection of this text and the complexities involved in it indicates that the reference could also be to the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, Antiochus Epiphanes, or Pompey."²⁰ "I remain convinced of the pre-70 C.E. dating."²¹ Thus, the plates of brass could have contained an account something like that of *Pseudo-Philo* or perhaps even an early version of this historical account, but there is no certitude here.

WHAT WAS KNOWN ABOUT *PSEUDO-PHILO* IN JOSEPH SMITH'S DAY?

Extremely little, and probably nothing at all, was known about *Pseudo-Philo* until late in the nineteenth century. Fragments of this work were published in Latin by Montague Rhodes James in 1893. The second fragment was entitled *Visio Cenez Patris Gothoniel*. In 1917 Rhodes published an English translation. He felt that his fragments and the name Cenez "were new and completely unknown."²² In fact, however, Rhodes's fragments had been published in 1527 in Basel, Switzerland, under the title *Philonis Judaei Alexandrini Libri Antiquitatum*, but he wrongly ascribed these works to Philo of Alexandria. They subsequently escaped the notice of editors collecting the works of Philo and fell into virtually complete obscurity. So, although parts of this work were published in Latin three hundred years before Joseph Smith began translating the Book of Mormon, they had fallen into oblivion. In 1898, Cohn wrote that the *Biblical Antiquities* had "attracted scarcely any attention to the present day" and that it was "full time that the *Liber antiquitatum biblicarum* should again be rescued from its obscurity."²³

CONCLUSION

What, then, can be said of Kenas, Zenez, Zenec, Cenez, Zenoch, Zenock, and Zenos? First, it has been demonstrated that a text with roots in ancient Palestine manifests considerable similarity to Zenos's allegory of the olive tree and to the interpretations and applications given to that allegory by Jacob. Who would have thought, in 1829, that a text like the farewell assembly of Cenez would surface only sixty years after the publication of the Book of Mormon? Given the obscurity of information about *Pseudo-Philo* prior 1890, the affinities between the allegory of the vineyard in *Pseudo-Philo* and the allegory of the olive tree in Jacob 4–6 are impressive.

The possibility of some indirect relationship between the figure of Cenez in *Pseudo-Philo* and the prophets Zenos and Zenoch in the Book of Mormon is possible, but no more than a general connection between the Cenez-like material and Jacob 4–6 can be substantiated at the present time. Perhaps they were associates, cousins, or known to each other. The considerations involved in dating *Pseudo-Philo* do not preclude such possibilities. The *Pseudo-Philo* is a valuable text shedding light on the religious, cultural, and literary backgrounds of the writing of Israelite history and of the Book of Mormon. Through it in particular, the western mind can more deeply appreciate yet further dimensions of the symbolic values of the olive in Jacob 5.

Notes

1. Leopold Cohn, "An Apocryphal Work Ascribed to Philo of Alexandria," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 10 (1898): 307–11. James H. Charlesworth, ed., *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1985), 2:298–99. There also exist Hebrew fragments of a retroversion of *Pseudo-Philo* found in the *Chronicles of Jerahmeel*, presented by D. J. Harrington, *The Hebrew Fragments of Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum Preserved in the Chronicles of Jerahmeel*, Texts and Translations 3, Pseudepigrapha Series 3 (Cambridge,

Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974). For a report of recent developments and bibliography, see Daniel J. Harrington, "A Decade of Research on Pseudo-Philo's Biblical Antiquities," *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* 2 (1988): 3–12.

2. Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2:297–377.

3. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 5.3.3; cf. Joshua 15:17.

4. For analyses of farewell speeches in the Bible and in the ancient Mediterranean, see William S. Kurz, *Farewell Addresses in the New Testament* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1990), and "Luke 22:14–38 and Greco-Roman and Biblical Farewell Addresses," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 104 (1985): 251–68. For a study applying Kurz's research to King Benjamin's speech, see "Benjamin's Speech: A Classic Ancient Farewell Address," in John W. Welch, ed., *Reexploring the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1992), 120–23. Similarly, Jacob 4–6 can be understood readily as containing most of the elements present in the idealized ancient farewell address.

5. Paul also spoke of his allegory of the tame and wild olive tree as a "mystery" and was eager for his Gentile converts to know its meaning so that what had happened to the Jews might not happen to them (Romans 11:25).

6. See Harrington's comments in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* 2:298–300.

7. Hugh Nibley, *Since Cumorah*, vol. 7 in *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1988), 286–90.

8. *Book of Mormon Critical Text*, 3 vols. (Provo: F.A.R.M.S., 1987), 1:115 n970, 3:948 n211.

9. Most recently noted by Royal Skousen in "Piecing Together the Original Manuscript," *BYU Today* 46/3 (May 1992): 22. See also, the spelling of Zenoch the 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon for Helaman 8:20, and in the 1879 edition for Alma 34:7. *Book of Mormon Critical Text*, 2:734 n763, 3:948 n212.

10. Guido Kisch, *Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, in *Notre Dame Publications in Mediaeval Studies* 10 (South Bend, Ind.: Notre Dame University Press, 1949), 168, note a.

11. Helaman 8:19 specifically indicates that Zenos was slain. Helaman 8:20 does not say how Zenoch died, but Alma 33:17 says that he was stoned to death because he testified of the Son of God.

12. For example, Cenez purged Israel of 6110 sinful men in all the tribes and their names were written in books that were burned along with those men; this may compare with the recording of names in Mosiah 6:1 and the burning of people and their books in Ammonihah

in Alma 14. Cenez used the Urim and Thummim to “reveal to [the priests] the truth”; he obtained post-judgment confessions from sinners being executed (cf. Nehor in Alma 1:15 and Korihor in Alma 30:52–53). The Lord gave Cenez twelve shining stones to keep in the ark of the covenant (*Pseudo-Philo* 26:9–15; cf. Ether 3:1–4). Cenez was also shown the wonders that God was “ready to do by reason of [the] covenant in the last days.”

13. In addition, many features of the Cenez account in *Pseudo-Philo* are common to both the Bible and the Book of Mormon. For example, Cenez was a prophet-judge in Israel, and this became the preferred form of government for Nephite prophet-judges like Alma. The organization of the military in Cenez’s account used the conventional “captain of fifty” as the unit commander (27:15; see also Isaiah 3:3; cf. 1 Nephi 3:31; Mosiah 11:19; 18:18). Cenez personally wielded a supernaturally powerful sword to single-handedly defeat the Amorites (27:1–12; cf. Omni 1:13; Alma 2:31). Both the sword of Cenez and the sword of Laban were used to kill those who were delivered into the prophet’s hands by God. While Cenez won his miraculous victory, a deep sleep came over all the soldiers in the camp of Israel (cf. Mosiah 24:19; Alma 51:33; 1 Samuel 26:12).

14. “Since we have to do, not with the original text, but with a translation of a translation of the original, it is naturally difficult to determine with accuracy the period to which the unknown author belonged.” Cohn, “An Apocryphal Work Ascribed to Philo of Alexandria,” 324.

15. *Ibid.*, 291.

16. *Ibid.*, 313.

17. *Ibid.*, 314.

18. *Ibid.*, 315.

19. *Ibid.*, 322.

20. Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2:299. In addition, the rest of the work may be older, even if that one passage had been changed *ex eventu*. Accordingly, the assessment of Blake Ostler that *Pseudo-Philo* “is much too late (c. 135 B.C.)” to be a reliable source relative to the Book of Mormon need not rule out the relevance of the *Pseudo-Philo* entirely. Blake Ostler, “The Book of Mormon as a Modern Expansion of an Ancient Source,” *Dialogue* 20/1 (Spring 1987): 66–123.

21. Harrington, “A Decade of Research,” 4.

22. Cohn, “An Apocryphal Work Ascribed to Philo of Alexandria,” 277.

23. *Ibid.*, 278–79.

14

Zenos and the Texts of the Old Testament

David Rolph Seely and John W. Welch

When Jacob rehearsed to his people the extensive allegory of the olive tree, he quoted to them “the words of the prophet Zenos, which he spake unto the house of Israel” (Jacob 5:1). The words of Zenos were known to the Nephites from the plates of brass, which originated in Israel sometime prior to Lehi’s departure from Jerusalem around 600 B.C. The ancient Israelite origin of Zenos’s allegory logically invites a comparison between the writings of Zenos and those of other early Israelite prophets. In light of the fact that plants, especially the olive and the vine, were often used in the Bible to symbolize God’s relationships with Israel, a large field of Old Testament literature exists that can be extensively and profitably compared with Jacob 5.¹ This paper sets out the main texts in the Old Testament relevant to the allegory of the olive tree and shows how the olive tree was used anciently to symbolize both blessing and cursing, both prosperity and judgment. By approaching these Old Testament olive texts in their approximate chronological order, it is also argued that the best way to account for all of these texts is to conclude that Zenos was a relatively early prophet who stood near the head of this persistent and powerful Israelite literary theme. First, consider the following series of texts.



An old stand of olive trees in Israel. The image of the olive symbolized many positive aspects of God's relationship with Israel, including his mercy, love, care, and long-suffering. In addition, it symbolized positive qualities in Israel: its fruitfulness, longevity, and ability to thrive in relatively poor soil and to be improved by grafting. The olive, however, also symbolized certain negative characteristics in Israelite history, such as tendencies to revert to a wild state, to produce bitter fruit, and to decay. Several prophets in Israel utilized the imagery of the olive tree, but no one did so more comprehensively and effectively than did the Prophet Zenos.

EXODUS 15

The seminal text from which the olive imagery in the Old Testament seems to have sprouted is Exodus 15:17. Shortly after their exodus out of Egypt and into the Sinai, being delivered from bondage and oppression under the miraculous leadership of the prophet Moses, the Israelites sang a triumphant song celebrating Pharaoh's defeat and Jehovah's deliverance of his people on dry land in the midst of the sea. Exodus 15:1–19, known as the Song of the Sea,² is one of the earliest examples of Israelite poetry in the Old Testament.³ A sort of ballad commemorating the monu-

mental liberation of Israel, these verses became one of the foundational documents in the collective cultural memory and spiritual awareness of the Israelites for centuries to come. The Song of the Sea ends by extolling the Lord and prophesying that he will bring the Israelites into a new land and plant them there in a high and sacred station: "Thou shalt bring them in, and *plant* them in the *mountain* of thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, *which thou hast made* for thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established" (Exodus 15:17, emphasis added).

Implicit in this text are the seeds of a full-blown image. Here Israel is depicted as a plant. It is to be planted in a high place, the place of the Lord's inheritance, or, in other words, in the Lord's eternal family estate. This place is said to have been prepared personally by the hands of the Lord, obviously with love and care toward his people. The message of this imagery is not that God is exiling the Israelites to some remote and obscure place, but that he is bringing them home to his own property, to live in his own land and be a part of his own household. Consistent with common ancient Near Eastern imagery, this high and holy mountain is identified with the House of the Lord, the sanctuary, or temple, in which the Lord lived.⁴

The plant in Exodus 15:17 is not specifically identified but would likely be either an olive tree or a vine, both of which are used in the Old Testament to personify Israel. For example, Psalm 52:8, Hosea 14:6, and Jeremiah 11:16 all compare Israel to an olive tree, and Psalm 80:8–16, Isaiah 5:1–7, Hosea 14:7, and Ezekiel 19:10 compare Israel to a vine. Hosea 14:6–7 is an important passage because it compares Israel both to an olive tree and a vine. These passages demonstrate that in many ways the olive tree and the vine are synonymous images.⁵ Both represent staples of the

ancient economy and diet: oil and wine. For example, in Jotham's parable of the trees who would not be king and the bramble who would (Judges 9:7–21), the olive is the first candidate and the vine the third, after the fig. Olive trees and vineyards are often mentioned together as the mainstays of agriculture in Israel (Exodus 23:11; Deuteronomy 6:11; 24:20–21; Joshua 24:13; Judges 15:5; 2 Kings 5:26; Amos 4:9). In addition, both need to be cared for, nourished, and carefully pruned in order to be productive—all images conducive of a comparison with man's relationship to God.

The dominance and the development of the themes of Exodus 15:17 in Jacob 5 are evident. Zenos begins with the image of "a tame olive tree, which a man *took* and nourished in his vineyard" (Jacob 5:3, emphasis added). This seems to allude back to the planting prophesied earlier in Exodus 15:17. As the plant in Jacob 5 waxes old and begins to decay, further plantings and transplantings are mentioned by Zenos. Eight times the English word *plant* or *planted* is used by Zenos (Jacob 5:21, 23, 24, 25, 43, 44, 52, 54), showing the strength of this metaphor from Exodus 15 in depicting God's dynamic relationship to his people.

Moreover, Zenos explicitly states that the olive tree was planted and cared for in the man's own vineyard (Jacob 5:3). Thus, the loving care and personal attention given to the vineyard by its Lord show that the preparations made by the hand of the Lord and mentioned in Exodus 15 were not discontinued or abandoned.

Furthermore, Zenos begins his allegory with the mental image of the large and central olive tree standing at the top of a high point in the vineyard, for when the Lord hides the natural branches in order to preserve them he takes them down into the "nethermost parts of the vineyard" (Jacob 5:14). The image of height recalls the mountain of Exodus

15:17. No explicit temple imagery, however, has been detected in Jacob 5. Since Jacob probably delivered the sermon reported in Jacob 4–6 from the temple in the city of Nephi (just as he spoke from that temple when he delivered his prophetic chastisements in Jacob 2–4; see Jacob 2:2), we can be relatively confident that no explicit temple allusions were present in Zenos’s Hebrew text, for otherwise Jacob would probably have noted and utilized them in his own temple context as he spoke from the temple of Nephi. The absence of temple imagery in Zenos’s allegory, like any other argument from silence, is not particularly significant, but it may be taken as slight evidence that Zenos wrote before the temple of Solomon was constructed, for if his allegory had been written when that temple was standing, the reference to the sanctuary in Exodus 15 would have been difficult for Zenos to overlook.

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF OLIVE IMAGERY

The thrust of the plant imagery in Exodus 15 is positive. It emphasizes the merciful blessings given by the Lord to his people. The promised land of Israel was “a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey” (Deuteronomy 8:8). But early in the development of this Old Testament literary theme, negative implications of this imagery began to emerge. Just as plants, especially the olive, are symbols of life, they also symbolize death and decay; and just as the covenant promises great blessings, so it also contains curses. While olive trees live a long time and with fertilizer can survive in relatively dry and stony conditions, giving hope for an abundant harvest and a peaceful beautiful existence, this plant also requires regular attention and cultivation to pre-

vent it from reverting to a decayed or wild state. Thus, as early as Deuteronomy 28:40, one of many poignant curses heaped upon the heads of the Israelites in the event they disobeyed the voice of the Lord was couched in terms of olive symbolism: "Thou shalt have olive trees throughout all thy coasts but thou shalt not anoint thyself with the oil; for thine olive shall cast his fruit." Accordingly, the image of the olive tree supported symbols of blessing and also of cursing.⁶

Because the writers of several Old Testament texts seem to assume that their audiences were familiar with an extended allegory containing both the positive and negative images of this olive symbolism (as discussed later), it seems reasonable to conclude that the full development of this complex plant symbolism for Israel emerged about the time of the unification of Israel under Saul and David. From that time forth, Israel was settled and planted in one place to "move no more" (2 Samuel 7:10). Since Nathan's prophecy in Samuel 7 shows that plant imagery was drawn upon again as an image of Israel's settled affairs at the time of the early monarchy, one may see this as a terminus before which the full metaphor would have been developed and understood.

Thus it appears significant that the recently discovered pseudepigraphical book known as the *Pseudo-Philo* contains a text, attributed to the premonarchical leaders of Israel in the early generations after Joshua, that embraces both the negative and positive elements of this growing metaphor.⁷ In this setting an aged Israelite prophet named Cenez (or Zenez, Zenec, Kenas) is said to have called all Israel together when he was about to die and revealed to them the word of the Lord, prophesying how the Lord had toiled among his people, how he wanted to choose a plant to care for it and to call it by his own name forever, but how that plant did not recognize the Lord as its planter but destroyed

its own fruit. Despite Israel's rejection of the Lord, Cenez promised that the Lord would still spare Israel in the abundance of his mercy.⁸ This text has the ring of an early text, one closely related to Exodus 15. It introduced, perhaps for the first time (at least literarily), the ominous message that Israel would, in fact, not produce fruit for the Lord and that it would not be destroyed by outside forces, but would destroy its own fruit. Not exhibiting awareness of subsequent history to the contrary—for Israel in fact was conquered by outside forces and was not physically spared—the *Pseudo-Philo* (although only preserved in post-Christian Latin manuscripts) seems to reflect an early development of the imagery of Israel as the Lord's plant.

The plant for Cenez, however, was the vine. On a grander scale, Zenos introduced the image of the olive tree, one of the most impressive and beautiful sights on the landscape of ancient Palestine. In the extended allegory of Zenos, both the positive and negative images of the foregoing texts are developed to an exceptional degree. The Lord's love and concern is repeatedly projected. The Lord and his servants toil tirelessly, again and again, to bring forth fruit from this vineyard. No effort was spared. Even after it became obvious that it might be better to cut down all the old trees and start over, the servant begs with the Lord to "spare it a little longer" (Jacob 5:50). But the tree had already begun to wax old and decay; and in the process of the servant's pruning, all branches that produced bitter fruit were cut off and burned so they would not clutter or burden the soil. While a plentiful harvest was eventually obtained by the Lord of the vineyard, the specter of an ultimate purge remains: Zenos's allegory ends with this threatening warning: "Evil fruit shall again come into my vineyard, . . . then cometh the season and the end; and my vineyard will I cause to be burned with fire" (Jacob 5:77).

PSALM 52

Assuming that Zenos's allegory or something like it existed at an early stage in Israelite literary history, one can discern echoes of it and allusions to it down through the centuries. Some of these texts emphasize the favorable and merciful features of the olive or vine imagery, while at other times they draw upon negative, judgmental strands.

For example, Psalm 52, which praises "the goodness of God [which] endureth continually" (Psalm 52:1), ends positively by exhorting the righteous to trust in the strength of the Lord and in the abundance of his riches but not to trust in one's own strength or wickedness. The righteous man in Psalm 52 sings, "I am like a green olive tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever" (Psalm 52:8; see also Psalm 128:3). In these lines we encounter an early indication that this plant in the house of God was already understood in Israel to be an olive tree. Interestingly, the Hebrew text describes the tree as *ra'anana*, meaning "green, flourishing, prosperous, or surrounded with foliage," or "anointed" (Psalm 52:8). And more to the point of Jacob 5, the Greek Septuagint translation rendered this Hebrew adjective as *katakarpos*, describing the olive as "fruitful" (cf. the frequent reference to fruit in Jacob 5). Evidently the Hebrew reader of the Psalms automatically understood the green, spreading, and flourishing tree—perhaps from an established and familiar image such as that reflected in Psalm 1, to which this verse in Psalm 52 is merely an allusion⁹—to be a fruitful tree. The emphasis on the fruitfulness of the green tree was spelled out explicitly when this Psalm was translated into Greek.

At the same time that Psalm 52 is beneficent, Psalm 52:5 contains the ominous foreboding that God shall "likewise" destroy the wicked by taking them away to some unknown

land or by pruning them out of the tree. The Psalmist sings, "God shall likewise destroy thee for ever, he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place, and root thee out of the land of the living" (Psalm 52:5). Significantly, the word *pluck* or *plucked* is used nine times by Zenos (Jacob 5:7, 7, 9, 26, 45, 52, 57, 58, 73). Any Israelite who was familiar with the type of allegory related by Zenos would have readily seen in this single word an allusion to its entire image of judgment and destruction of the wicked. The fact that verse 5 refers to this "plucking" and "uprooting" before it mentions the tree itself in verse 8 is further indication that the Psalmist took it for granted that his audience already knew the allegory of the olive tree and the negative image that the wicked must be pruned out and destroyed. Moreover, the particle *gām* ("likewise") introduces verse 5, but it seems disconnected syntactically to verse 4. "Like what?" one wonders. Perhaps this, also, is an indication that the Psalmist assumed that his audience already had a general knowledge of Zenos's extended allegory of the olive tree with its judgmental elements so that they needed no more than an oblique reference to understand the relevance of these factors in this early psalm.

Psalms are notoriously difficult to date as they do not have for the most part any explicit historical context and the poetic language often contains few hints of a specific date. Psalm 52 is a prayer for deliverance of an individual from an enemy in which the Psalmist compares himself to a green olive tree in the house of God. The introduction puts the psalm in the time of David and Saul, which is very early—about 1000 B.C. There are several conflicting chronological clues in this psalm. Verse 5 says, "God shall . . . pluck thee out of thy dwelling place [Hebrew, *tent*]." If this is a reference to a temple typology, as most scholars believe, it refers to the orig-

inal dwelling place of the Lord in the Tabernacle. In verse 8 the Psalmist refers to "the house of God," a common phrase referring to the temple. If these are to be taken as chronological clues, the "tent" might suggest a time before about 940 B.C., when the temple was built, and a reference to the temple would designate a period between 940 and 587 B.C., when it was destroyed. For a lack of any compelling reason to date this psalm later we will assume a fairly early date.¹⁰

PSALM 80

Using the imagery of a vine that grows larger than a cedar tree, Psalm 80 also reflects a broad cultural familiarity with the blessings and cursings implicit in the literature that compares God's relationship with Israel to that of a farmer with his plant:

- 8 Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt:
 thou hast cast out the heathen, and *planted* it.
- 9 Thou preparedst room before it,
 and didst cause it to take *deep root*, and it filled the
 land.
- 10 The hills were covered with the shadow of it,
 and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars.
- 11 *She sent out her boughs* unto the sea,
 and her branches unto the river.
- 12 Why hast thou then broken down her hedges,
 so that all they which pass by the way do *pluck* her?
- 13 The boar out of the wood doth waste it,
 and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.
- 14 Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts:
 look down from heaven, and behold, and *visit* this
 vine;
- 15 And the *vineyard which thy right hand hath planted*,
 and the *branch* that thou madest strong for thyself.
- 16 It is *burned with fire, it is cut down*:
 they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.

- 17 Let thy hand be upon *the man* of thy right hand,
upon *the son of man* whom thou madest strong for
thyself.
- 18 So will not we go back from thee:
quicken us, and we will call upon thy name.
- 19 Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts,
cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

(Psalm 80:8–19, emphasis added.)

Several elements present in this early text are also found in Zenos's allegory. Psalm 80 speaks directly about the root of this plant, that it took "deep root" (Psalm 80:9). The roots receive extensive attention in Jacob 5 (see 5:8, 11, 18, 34, 35, 36, 37, 48, 53, 54, 59, 60, 65, 66, 73). Somehow, as the Psalmist envisions, the branches of this great plant will spread "unto the sea and . . . unto the river" (Psalm 80:11). More specifically, Zenos tells how this propagation will take place by carrying tender shoots of the plant to the nethermost parts of the vineyard (Jacob 5:13–14). As the hedges protecting the vineyard fall into disrepair (cf. Isaiah 5:5), the plant does not thrive, and it pleads with the Lord to come again and visit it, by the strong hand of "the man of thy right hand," promising that, this time, the plant will remember to "call upon thy name" (Psalm 80:17–18). These poetical verses reflect similar elements in Jacob 5, such as the deteriorated and desperate state of the tree and the emotional pleading and strenuous labors of the servant of the Lord. Finally, the abrupt and cryptic reference in this psalm to the ultimate fate of the plant being burned with fire and cut down (Psalm 80:16) seems to presuppose a knowledge of the final verses in Jacob 5.

Regarding the dating of Psalm 80, Israel is portrayed here as a vine brought out of Egypt and planted in the promised land; this psalm is a prayer for deliverance from national enemies. A natural historical context for this psalm

would be a time of national crisis or emergency. Verse 2 mentions that the threat is to the northern Israelite tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin—therefore the psalm must come from the period before 722—the destruction of the North. There were many national emergencies in this time period. Scholars have dated this psalm from the eighth century to the time of the Maccabees.¹¹ From the circumstantial evidence, we date this passage from the eighth century but clearly before Isaiah 5.

HOSEA 14

Next, a text from Hosea, written around 750 B.C.,¹² celebrated the loving mercy of the Lord, who promised to heal Israel, to love them freely, and to welcome their return. In this optimistic context the beauty of Israel is described “as the olive tree”:

- 4 I will heal their backsliding,
I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away
from him.
- 5 I will be as the dew unto Israel:
he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his *roots* as
Lebanon.
- 6 His *branches* shall spread,
and his beauty shall be *as the olive tree*, and his smell
as Lebanon.
- 7 They that dwell under his shadow *shall return*;
they shall revive as the corn,
and grow as the vine:
the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.
- 8 Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with
idols?
I have heard him, and observed him:
I am like a green fir tree.
From me is thy fruit found.

(Hosea 14:4–8, emphasis added.)

This too is a powerful literary passage, and its effectiveness is enhanced by, and perhaps dependent upon, a knowledge of Zenos's allegory. By mixing a variety of plant species into this passage, including the lily, olive, corn, vine, and the green fir tree, Hosea seems conversant with a tradition that allowed for the combination of olive and vineyard terminology, as in Jacob 5. He extends that imagery to include a range of plants, but with an emphasis on strengthening of the roots, the spreading of branches, and finding fruit. Obviously, the lily and the fir tree cannot have been the original focus of attention in Hosea's imagery, since they do not bear fruit or grow in this way.

The main emphasis in Hosea's prophecy is upon the return of those who dwell under the shadow of the olive tree. His point makes good sense only if one assumes that the tender shoots that once grew under the shadow of the trunk of the olive tree were taken away and transplanted so that they might "return." In addition, the reference to Lebanon may contain an allusion to the role of the Gentiles in the allegory of Zenos. At first, Hosea says, Israel will cast forth roots like a Gentile nation, "as Lebanon." In time, however, Ephraim will repent and realize that it wants to have nothing more to do with idols, for Ephraim has heard Lebanon and observed Gentile ways; then Ephraim will see itself as a green fir tree and like a fruitful olive. The concept of fruitfulness, recalling again that Jacob 5 uses the word *fruit* or *fruits* sixty-seven times, is even stronger in the Septuagint version of Hosea than in the Hebrew. Instead of the phrase "calves of our lips" in Hosea 14:2, the Greek reads, "And we will render in return the fruit of our lips"; four verses later the olive tree is described as "a fruitful [*katakarpos*] olive," reminiscent of the same word used in the Septuagint translation of Psalm 52.

In any event, Hosea ends with the acknowledgment

that his prophecy is intentionally cryptic. He promises, however, that it will be understood by the wise and the prudent who know the ways of the Lord (Hosea 14:9). Evidently, Hosea addressed a group he expected to catch on to what he was talking about because of some prior understanding of the ways and words of the Lord.

ISAIAH 5

The next prophet relevant to the examination of possible lines of biblical dependence and comparison with Zenos is Isaiah, who prophesied and wrote between 740–701 B.C. (Isaiah 1:1). Three of his texts are particularly pertinent. Among the earliest of Isaiah's writings is his beautiful song for his beloved, a love song about his vineyard. This text, also found in 2 Nephi 15, reads as follows, with notes in brackets demonstrating significant cognates, ambiguities, and word plays:

- 1 Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard.
My wellbeloved hath a *vineyard in a very fruitful hill* [mountain]:
- 2 And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth *wild grapes* [stench].
- 3 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard.
- 4 *What could have been done more to my vineyard,* that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes [stench]?

5 And now go to;
 I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard:
 I will take away the hedge thereof,
 and it shall be eaten up;
 and break down the wall thereof,
 and it shall be trodden down:
 6 And I will lay it waste:
 it shall not be *pruned* [sung], nor *digged* [missed]; but
 there shall come up briars and thorns:
 I will also command the clouds
 that they rain no rain upon it.
 7 For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts
 is the house of Israel,
 and the men of Judah
 his pleasant plant:
 and he looked for judgment [*mšpt*],
 but behold oppression [*mšph*];
 for righteousness [*šdqh*],
 but behold a cry [*š'qh*].

(Isaiah 5:1–7, emphasis added.)¹³

It is evident that in this text, Isaiah drew, at least to some extent, upon prior Israelite lore. In Isaiah 4:2 he simply said, "In that day shall the branch [plant] of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely." Since he gave no further explanation there, we assume that his audience was familiar with such imagery as appears in Exodus 15:7, of Israel as the planting of the Lord. Isaiah adapts and extends this imagery at the end of his song in Isaiah 5 to specify that the entire vineyard represents the house of Israel and its most precious plant symbolizes, not just the house of Israel, but specifically the men of Judah, their leading tribe.

In chapter 5, Isaiah portrays a judgment scene in which the Lord asks the inhabitants of Jerusalem to judge between him and his vineyard. In a fashion similar to other so-called

prophetic lawsuits,¹⁴ the prophet begins by rehearsing certain facts and then lodging a legal complaint. The facts explain how the friend of Isaiah had a vineyard on a very fruitful hill. He was responsible to take good care of the vineyard, fence it, remove stones or stumbling blocks, plant it with the best possible plants, build a tower for protection and a wine press; but the vineyard brought forth wild grapes, a stink. The man then asks the elders of Israel to acquit him of any legal liability toward the vineyard and states his intentions to withdraw from this venture, to take back his assets, to stop pruning and digging the vineyard to keep out the weeds. Obviously the house of Israel, the Lord's "pleasant plant," had not produced the righteousness that the Lord had expected, and instead the Lord is left only with a cry, like a widow or orphan pressing charges for relief (cf. Exodus 22:22–23).

Several words in Isaiah's judgment scene are reminiscent of Zenos, including the "vineyard" on a very fruitful hill; the bad fruit being "wild"; the plea of the Lord asking, "What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it?" (cf. Jacob 5:41, 47, 49); and the declaration that the Lord will stop pruning and digging.

The following factors suggest that Isaiah was not announcing an original idea in this poetical song, but reshaping an existing literary tradition into poetic form:

1. By listing in verse 2 what he had done for the vineyard, the Lord does not mention that he had pruned and digged the vineyard. Later, however, the text clearly implies that the Lord had pruned and cultivated the vineyard on previous occasions, for the Lord asserts that he could have done nothing more for his vineyard and says that he plans to stop doing these things (verse 6). Nevertheless, the pruning and digging are not mentioned in the list of things the

Lord asserts that he had done in his vineyard (verse 2), and so one has to supply these elements to that list. Apparently Isaiah did not feel the need to provide a complete list of things that the Lord had done, because he could assume from the common culture that the audience knew full well the complete story as told by Zenos or someone like him.

2. The lawsuit setting of Isaiah 5 makes the best sense if we assume that the allegory of the vineyard was already known to Isaiah's Israelite audience. The legal action implied in the Lord's request that the elders of Israel judge between him and his vineyard is a complaint for the dissolution of a partnership. This action presupposes the prior existence of an understood joint venture based upon an agreed undertaking and set of obligations. For Isaiah to begin at the legal stage of dissolution without presupposing a prior contractual understanding constituting that relationship would seem to place the cart before the horse.

3. Isaiah borrows and adapts the standard metaphor in Isaiah 5:1–7. Often Israel is represented as a single plant, but Isaiah goes out of his way to explain that for his purposes all Israel is the vineyard and the men of Judah are the one central plant in which the trouble and the decay begins. The fact that he can draw on this general image in making his specific point about Judah's wickedness is an indication that an older account existed that has been adapted by Isaiah for use in his oracle to Judah and Jerusalem (see Isaiah 2:1).

4. This short passage gives an incomplete picture. From the prophecies of Hosea and others, Isaiah's audience would have known that the Lord would return and that Israel would again become beautiful and fruitful. The audience in Isaiah 5 understands that the judgment against the house of Israel will be suspended—the typical outcome in prophetic lawsuits—in order that the people might repent

and change their ways. The song in Isaiah 5, standing alone however, gives the impression that the Lord's judgment will be carried out immediately and that the allegory is an exclusively negative, judgmental image. Other passages throughout Isaiah, however, prove that he is always working implicitly with a fuller metaphor, drawing upon parts of it from passage to passage depending upon his immediate needs and purposes. For example, in Isaiah 17:9–11, Isaiah prophesies:

- 9 In that day shall his strong cities be as a forsaken bough, and an uppermost branch, which they left because of the children of Israel: and there shall be desolation.
- 10 Because thou hast forgotten the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the rock of thy strength, therefore shalt thou plant pleasant plants, and shalt set it [graft it] with strange slips:
- 11 In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish:
but the harvest shall be a heap
in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow.

Here we see other parts of the full image—that the lofty branch will be forsaken for a time, but eventually it will be grafted with strange plants so that, in the end, the plant will grow and yield a substantial harvest, albeit in a day of grief and sorrow as some are cut off and destroyed in the fire.

Ultimately, the image of the olive tree is positive for Isaiah. When “the days of thy mourning shall be ended, thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified” (Isaiah 60:20–21). In the end, for Isaiah, the final judgment is compared to a joyous harvest of olives and grapes:

13 When thus it shall be in the midst of the land
 among the people,
 there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree,
 as the gleaming grapes when the vintage is done.

14 They shall lift up their voice,
 they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord,
 they shall cry aloud from the sea.

Wherefore, glorify ye the Lord in the fires,
 even the name of the Lord God of Israel in the isles of
 the sea.

(Isaiah 24:13–15.)

Especially noteworthy here is the simultaneous appearance of the olive, the harvest, the fire at this final judgment, and the consciousness that Israel will be scattered upon the isles of the sea. From these disconnected references in Isaiah to plant symbolism, it seems that behind them all stands a consistent but complex metaphor of the growth and development of a full course of God's relationships to and dealings with the house of Israel. All of the features of that metaphor compare with similar elements blended together in the Book of Mormon text in Jacob 5.

JEREMIAH 11

Jeremiah prophesied from about 627–580 B.C. (Jeremiah 1:1–3).¹⁵ One of the themes of Jeremiah, as he was commissioned in his prophetic call, was to “root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant” (Jeremiah 1:10). Jeremiah was to prophesy destruction and restoration and the corresponding horticultural imagery of “rooting out” and “planting” pervade his book.¹⁶ While Hosea used only the positive images of the basic allegory and Isaiah featured both the positive and negative, Jeremiah utilized only the negative in his use of the olive tree. But he does prophesy of the restoration of the gospel

and the gathering of Israel in the latter days in terms of “sowing” and “planting” (Jeremiah 31:5; 31:27–29; 32:41). Because Jeremiah was a prophet in times of lamentation and judgment, it is not surprising that he used the allegory of the olive tree to heighten his message of catastrophic suffering for breaking the covenant with the Lord. The main text in this regard from Jeremiah is as follows:

14 Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up a cry or prayer for them: for I will not hear them in the time that they cry unto me for their trouble.

15 What hath my beloved to do in mine house, seeing she hath wrought lewdness with many, and the holy flesh is passed from thee? when thou doest evil, then thou rejoicest.

16 The Lord called thy name, A green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit: with the noise of a great tumult he hath kindled fire upon it, and the branches of it are broken.

17 For the Lord of hosts, that planted thee, hath pronounced evil against thee, for the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they have done against themselves to provoke me to anger in offering incense unto Baal.

(Jeremiah 11:14–17.)

The general image projected here is that of a tree struck by lightning. Although the Hebrew text is quite corrupt and therefore difficult to interpret, it begins with a reference to the fact that the Lord in the past had “called thy name a green olive tree, fair and of goodly fruit.” Clearly Jeremiah reminds his audience of a known metaphor, which could have been known to them from Psalm 52 or a text such as that of Zenos.

Jeremiah then moves directly to the judgment motif: “With the noise of a great tumult he hath kindled fire upon

it, and the branches of it are broken" (11:16). The Septuagint version reads, "The branches are become good for nothing [*ēchreiōthēsan*]," which is a reading close to Zenos, "And now all the trees of my vineyard are good for nothing" (Jacob 5:42). Behind the Hebrew and Greek versions of this text, there were evidently two traditions in ancient Israel about the fate of these branches: were they "broken off" or did they "become good for nothing"? Perhaps both of these traditions trace their origins to the allegory of Zenos, for Zenos also refers to the "natural branches [that] had been broken off" (Jacob 5:30), as well as becoming "good for nothing" (Jacob 5:42).

Next, Jeremiah reminds his audience that the Lord had planted his people (Jeremiah 11:17), clearly in the tradition of Exodus 15:17 (cf. Jacob 5:3). And Jeremiah is able to accuse the people of the "evil which they have done against themselves," an accusation that receives no further explanation and thus assumes everyone understands the responsibility for the corruption of the olive tree lies within the house of Israel itself, or as Zenos says, "Taking strength unto themselves, . . . is not this the cause that the trees of thy vineyard have become corrupted?" (Jacob 5:48).

In the end, the people plotted against Jeremiah by throwing his allegory back at him. They said, "Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof and let us cut him off from the land of the living" (Jeremiah 11:19). Obviously two can play the allegory game, and one way to eliminate the problems caused by Jeremiah was to eliminate Jeremiah himself. The spontaneous use of the tree and fruit imagery by the people themselves in response to Jeremiah shows once again the great extent to which this imagery had become common parlance in pre-exilic Israel.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we have focused here primarily on Old Testament texts that deal expressly with olive tree imagery and would have been known to ancient Israelites down to the time of Lehi. Many other texts could be cited if we were to expand our coverage to include allegories involving other kinds of plants or texts from post-exilic Israel. See, for example, Ezekiel 17:1–24; 19:10–14. All these texts demonstrate that Jacob 5 stands as part of an extensive literary tradition whose elements surface often; that tradition is not to be understood by reference to any single source alone. Sufficient examples of these texts have been identified and analyzed to support the hypothesis that the image of the olive tree was well known and very significant in pre-exilic Israel.

Although the evidence does not allow a firm conclusion with respect to the dating of the allegory of Zenos, the positive and negative dimensions of the Old Testament image of the olive tree are difficult to reconcile in these texts without assuming that a single paradigm (such as the allegory of Zenos) existed in ancient Israel utilizing both of these dimensions. Jacob 5 provides the full paradigm unifying the many scattered references in the Old Testament to the olive tree as an image for the house of Israel and illuminating what that image would likely have meant to an ancient Israelite audience.

While it remains possible that these two diametrically opposed strands of negative judgmental imagery and positive merciful imagery developed haphazardly in ancient Israel and that Zenos came late in that tradition and served to synthesize all these elements into a single coherent story, the simpler explanation is that Zenos probably preceded Psalms 52 and 80 by a few years and Hosea, Isaiah, and

Jeremiah by several generations, and that all these later prophets knew and drew upon Zenos, often quite specifically. In any event, it seems highly unlikely that Joseph Smith, operating on his own mental faculties, could have worked within the limited vocabulary of Jacob 5, while keeping in mind all the diverse and specific elements of each of these Old Testament texts, to weave back together from these complex strands such an elegant and vivid image as that of Zenos's masterful allegory in Jacob 5.

Notes

1. Several passages in the Old Testament explicitly use the olive tree symbolically: Deuteronomy 6:11; 24:20; 28:40; Judges 9:8–9; Psalms 52:8; 128:3; Hosea 14:6; Isaiah 17:6; 24:13; Jeremiah 11:16; Zechariah 4:3, 11–12. Many other texts use vine imagery or other horticultural metaphors in general to describe relationships between God and his people. Despite the significance of this literary motif in the Old Testament, no scholarly article has specifically been devoted to the subject of olive symbolism in the Old Testament. In addition to the basic Old Testament commentaries, see generally W. D. Davies, *Jewish and Pauline Studies* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 153–63; Ralph W. Doermann, "The Metaphor of the Vine and the Vineyard in the Hebrew Scriptures," SBL Regional Meeting, 1989, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio; E. Earle Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957), 121–24; and Shozo Fujita, "The Metaphor of Plant in Jewish Literature of the Intertestamental Period," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 7 (1976): 30–45.

2. This poem has also been designated as the Song of Miriam because of the reference to her in Exodus 15:20.

3. Frank M. Cross, Jr., and David N. Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 14 (1955): 237–50; George W. Coates, "The Song of the Sea," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 1 (1969): 1–17; D. N. Freedman, "The Song of the Sea," in *Pottery, Poetry, and Prophecy: Studies in Early Hebrew Poetry* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1980), 179–86. For a detailed discussion of the dating of Hebrew poetry, see Frank M. Cross and David N. Freedman, *Studies in Ancient Yahwistic Poetry* (Baltimore, 1950; reprinted Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1975) and David A. Robertson, *Linguistic*

Evidence in Dating Early Hebrew Poetry (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1975).

4. Most scholars argue that the mountain refers to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. For a brief discussion see Cross and Freedman, "The Song of Miriam," 249–50. Psalm 78:54, echoing the hand of God imagery of Exodus 15:17, also suggests this is a reference to the promised land, "And he brought them to the border of his sanctuary, even to this mountain, which his right hand had purchased." Freedman later argued that the "mountain of thine inheritance" was originally a reference to Mount Sinai where the people originally entered into the covenant. D. N. Freedman, "Temple Without Hands," in *Temples and High Places in Biblical Times*, ed. A. Biran, et al. (Jerusalem: Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology of the Hebrew Union College, 1981), 21–30. This is interesting in light of the fact that the roots of the olive tree in Jacob 5 are often interpreted as the covenant. Of course, the Temple in Jerusalem also represents the covenant.

5. For further discussion of the relationship between olives and vines, see John A. Tvedtnes, "Vineyard or Olive Orchard?" in this volume.

6. The formal lists of blessings and curses typically list the productivity of plants and trees. Righteousness is blessed with fertility and productivity: Leviticus 26:4, "And the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit"; Deuteronomy 28:4, "Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground." Wickedness is rewarded with the opposite: Leviticus 26:20, "And your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits"; Deuteronomy 28:18, "Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land."

7. D. J. Harrington's translation of *Pseudo-Philo* with detailed notes can be found in James H. Charlesworth, ed., *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 2:297–377.

8. For a full discussion of this text see John W. Welch, "The Last Words of Cenez and the Book of Mormon" in this volume.

9. "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit (LXX *karpos*) in his season" (Psalm 1:3).

10. Most scholars do not attempt to date this psalm precisely. Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 1–59* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988), 510.

11. Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 60–150* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988), 140.

12. The heading of Hosea 1:1 dates him between Uzziah and Hezekiah in the South (783–715 B.C.) and Jeroboam in the North (786–46 B.C.)

13. We are grateful to John Gee for his alternate renditions given in this text.

14. The prophetic lawsuit is a speech form discussed by many Old Testament scholars. See, for example, Kirsten Nielsen, *Yahweh as Prosecutor and Judge* (Sheffield, England: Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, 1978); James Limburg, "The Root R-I-B and the Prophetic Lawsuit Speeches," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 88 (1969): 291-304.

15. Jeremiah was forced to accompany a group of his fellow countrymen to Egypt who were fleeing the feared Babylonian reprisals following the assassination of Gedaliah (Jeremiah 40–41). The last of Jeremiah's prophecies (chaps. 42–44) were uttered in Egypt around 580 B.C.

16. See Robert Bach, *Bauen und Pflanzen*, in *Studien zur Theologie der alttestamentlichen Überlieferungen* (Festschrift G. von Rad; Neukirchen, 1961), 7–32.

15

The Olive Tree and the Work of God: Jacob 5 and Romans 11

James E. Faulconer

It takes little or no imagination to see a connection between Jacob 5 and Romans 11:8–24. Both texts use the olive tree to explain God’s salvation of Israel, and in both texts the metaphor of grafting is central. In fact, these are two of a very few uses of the grafting metaphor in scripture (see also Isaiah 17:10; 1 Nephi 10:14; 15:12–18; Alma 16:17). Both of these passages use the metaphor of grafting to discuss the same theme, the restoration of Israel. As part of that discussion, both Romans and Jacob use the idea of grafting as part of a discussion of the remnant of Israel reserved to God, a discussion that answers the question of whether Israel’s apostasy means that she has been rejected. And both passages focus on the operation of grace in the work of Israel’s salvation.¹ That there is a connection between these two passages of scripture is obvious, but the nature of that connection is less obvious.

The temptation is to explain this connection by jumping too quickly to the conclusion that Paul is relying directly on Zenos’s work. The temptation to make this link is clear: Since I presume that the parable of the olive tree was recorded on the brass plates and since we know that the brass plates contain much that remained available in Israel even after Lehi and his family left for their promised land, it is theoretically possible that Paul too had access to Zenos’s

prophecy through another transcription of it extant at his time.² Furthermore, the use of the olive tree metaphor for similar purposes in Jacob, Romans, and other places, such as Jeremiah and Hosea, suggests the possibility of a text underlying these passages upon which they depend. For example, in speaking of Israel's apostasy, Jeremiah 11:16 says, "The Lord called thy name, A green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit: with the noise of a great tumult he hath kindled fire upon it, and the branches of it are broken." Israel is an olive tree that is burned because of its worship of Baal.³ In speaking of Israel, Hosea 14:6 says, "His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon."⁴ Israel is also an olive tree at its restoration. Together the Jeremiah and Hosea passages have strong parallels to both the Romans passage and that of Jacob. A common text would explain this similarity: a text such as Zenos's prophecy—written at the time of Lehi or before (most likely in the Northern kingdom of Israel) and evidenced by similar language in other prophecies—would account for Paul's use of the olive tree metaphor in ways similar to its use in Jacob.

However, in spite of the seeming possibility that these two passages are linked textually, the differences in detail between them are striking and should give us pause. If we look at the overall effect, we see similarity. If we look at the linguistic details that create that effect and in which we would expect to find similarity if both are from the same source, we find significant differences. Though the categories designated by the terms parable, allegory, metaphor, simile, and so on are not unambiguous, I think it fair to say that the first obvious difference is that Jacob 5 is a parable or allegory, while Romans 11:8–24 is not. Equally obvious is the fact that in Romans 11 there is talk of only one tree,

though an additional tree, the source of the Gentile branches, is implied. In contrast, Jacob 5 has several trees, at least five: the original cherished tree (Jacob 5:3), the original wild tree (Jacob 5:7), and at least three transplanted shoots (Jacob 5:20, 23, and 24). In addition, Zenos's parable allows one to infer that there are still more olive trees in the vineyard.

A less immediately obvious difference is that each of these passages is given in response to rather different occasions. Jacob 5 is a response to the wickedness of the people (Jacob 1:15–17). Chapter 3 of Jacob is a direct call to repentance. Chapter 4 begins abruptly with an anacoluthic⁵ reflection on writing and moves to a written response to the spoken call to repentance. The sinfulness of his people seems to make Jacob reflect on the possibility of salvation and, consequently, to draw a parallel between the Jews and the Nephites. Jacob's concern for the salvation of his people makes him think of and take comfort in the promise of salvation for the Jews. Paul, on the other hand, is correcting a potentially dangerous attitude among those otherwise known for their saintliness (see Romans 1:8). Paul uses the image of the olive tree in warning the Gentiles not to think themselves superior to the Jews, even though the Jews have not accepted Christianity.

Furthermore, in Romans 11 the branches of the trees explicitly represent different groups of people, namely the Israelites and the Gentiles. In Jacob, however, it is less clear what the branches represent. If Jacob 5 is an allegory rather than a parable, it is clearly not an allegory like *Pilgrim's Progress*, in which each character or element corresponds to one and only one thing. The branches may represent different groups of people in Jacob, just as they do in Romans. That is certainly a traditional Latter-day Saint reading of the

text, and it is a reading suggested by comparison to 1 Nephi 10:14 and 15:12–18. But the description of the fruit of the olive tree as “good and the most precious above all other fruit” (Jacob 5:61) suggests an additional parallel, a parallel between the trees in the vineyard and the tree of life.⁶ The textual backdrop of 1 Nephi 8:10–16 and 11:21–25 (the discussion of the tree of life and its fruit in Lehi’s dream) adds strength to that suggestion. But a connection between Zenos’s parable and the tree of life renders any straightforward interpretation of the parable problematic and differentiates it from the olive tree metaphor in Romans 11.

A similar problem of interpretation is raised by the fact that Jacob 6:3 suggests a parallel between Jacob’s people and the workers in the vineyard rather than between the trees or the branches of the trees and the workers, as one might expect if the parable is comparable to Paul’s metaphor. And that problem is doubled by the fact that Jacob 6:4 speaks of Israel as both the root and the branches of the olive tree.⁷

For Paul, in contrast, Israel is the branches of the olive tree, branches that can be culled and replaced by Gentile branches, but Israel is not the root of the tree. In Romans, the root of the tree is holy and, presumably, unchangeable (Romans 11:16). Whatever branch is grafted into the tree becomes holy because of the strength of the root. One suspects that when mentioning the root of the tree, Paul has in mind either the covenant made with the fathers or, perhaps, the Savior. In Jacob, on the other hand, the root is anything but holy and changeless. It is about to perish (Jacob 6:8) and needs help in order to survive (Jacob 6:11, 54). The root nourishes the branches (Jacob 6:18, 34, 36, 54, and 59) and saves itself thereby (Jacob 6:18, 54). In spite of that, it also is weak (as in Jacob 6:65) and it is overcome by the branches

(Jacob 6:37, 48). At times the root is valuable (Jacob 6:4, 36, and 60); at other times it is worthless (Jacob 6:35).

It may also be significant that Romans speaks of grafting the Gentiles into the tree, but Jacob does not. In fact, neither does Nephi, who explains that the Israelites will be grafted back in “by way of the Gentiles” (1 Nephi 15:17; cf. 15:13: “through the fulness of the Gentiles”). Though we commonly assume that the wild branches grafted into the trees in Jacob 5 are the Gentiles, there is no textual warrant in Jacob 5 for doing so. The presumed similarity of the parable to Romans 11 may be part of the reason for that reading. However, if we follow the reading suggested by Jacob 6 and such passages as 1 Nephi 10:12–14 and 15:13–16, perhaps we will read the workers in Zenos’s parable, rather than the grafted branches, as representing the Gentiles. In contrast, Paul is explicit about the grafting in of the Gentiles.

In Paul’s letter, the permanent grafting in of the Gentiles is a means of saving the Jew by provoking him to jealousy, and it is, at least potentially, also the possibility of salvation for the Gentile. In Zenos’s prophecy, however, the grafting is not so clearly a means of saving any particular group. It is the means the Lord chooses for providing himself with fruit from the trees. Though at the beginning of Zenos’s parable, the tree itself appears to be important (for example, see Jacob 5:4, 7), it is apparent at the end that the trees and branches themselves, especially the wild branches, were incidental to the Lord’s purpose. In Jacob 5:57 the wild branches that produce bitter fruit are plucked out, and in Jacob 5:77 they all are burned.⁸ As the end of the parable makes apparent, the fruit, not the trees or their branches is important in Zenos’s parable:

And thus they labored . . . until the bad had been cast away out of the vineyard, and the Lord had preserved

unto himself that the trees had become again the natural fruit; . . . and the Lord of the vineyard had preserved unto himself the natural fruit, which was most precious unto him from the beginning. And it came to pass that . . . he called up his servants, and said unto them: . . . I have preserved the natural fruit, that it is good, even like as it was in the beginning. And blessed art thou; . . . because ye . . . have brought unto me again the natural fruit. . . . For behold, for a long time will I lay up of the fruit of my vineyard unto mine own self against the season, which speedily cometh; . . . I will lay up unto mine own self of the fruit, for a long time, according to that which I have spoken. And when the time cometh that evil fruit shall again come into my vineyard, then . . . cometh the season and the end; and my vineyard will I cause to be burned with fire.

(Jacob 5:74–77.)

Note that just as the possibility of good fruit is what keeps the Lord from destroying the vineyard, the presence of evil fruit brings the vineyard's burning. The point of Zenos's story is the gathering of fruit, not the preservation of either branches or root. In contrast, for Paul it is the tree and particularly its branches that matter, not the fruit, of which there is no mention in Romans 11.

Paul uses the olive tree to show how Israel will be preserved through an act of grace. The Lord will use Israel's jealousy of the Gentiles to entice Israel to return. Though Zenos too shows how Israel will be preserved through grace, he uses the olive tree in a very different way than does Paul. Zenos's parable demonstrates the lengths to which the Lord of the vineyard will go to preserve his fruit. As Jacob 5:60 makes clear, Zenos allegorizes the olive tree to show how the Lord can preserve his fruit (which remains undefined in the parable), but as verses 74 through 77 show, the tree itself is expendable. However, it is not at all clear

that the preserved fruit is to be identified with Israel. Consequently, for Jacob the parable shows the blessings that come to those who continue to work in the vineyard (Jacob 6:3). Where Paul uses the olive tree to bring the Gentiles to humility, Jacob sees in it the message that Israel, including his audience, must be faithful.

These and many other differences in detail between Jacob 5 and Romans 11 show that in spite of our temptation otherwise we may not make a very strong case for a common text connecting Jacob and Romans by pointing to their similarities.⁹ Those similarities indicate no more than a possibility, a possibility that seems less likely given that there seems, at first glance, to be no other evidence that Paul could have had Zenos's parable available to him. In fact, the absence of any strong evidence of Zenos's parable in any other New Testament or early Christian texts counts as evidence against the supposition.

Given the evidence to this point, it would seem more likely that, rather than a common text, Paul and Zenos shared a common rhetorical tradition, one in which the olive tree stands for Israel, and its destruction and restoration are associated loosely with Israel's apostasy and restoration.¹⁰ Passages in Psalm 80, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others provide a strong common background that Paul undoubtedly drew upon in writing to the Roman saints, a tradition that Paul assumed his audience already understood.¹¹ Though Paul utilized this Israelite tradition, he also reshaped it to suit his particular religious insights and pastoral needs.

In spite of the differences between Romans 11 and Jacob 5, however, other linguistic evidence suggests the possibility of a stronger connection between the Romans and Jacob passages. First, Zenos frequently uses the phrase "preserve

. . . unto myself” and the related phrase, “lay up . . . unto myself.”¹² We see similar language in Romans 11. There Paul takes up the question of how the Jews can continue to be the people of God even though they are presently disobedient to and gainsaying of God (Romans 10:21). Allegorizing history, Paul quotes from 1 Kings 19 to demonstrate the manner in which the Father preserved a remnant in the past: “But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace” (Romans 11:4–5). Israel is not cast off, because the Father has reserved unto himself a remnant. Translation differences might account for the use of “reserved” in one case and “preserved” in another, but the possibility is strong that we are looking at the same underlying word or specific concept (rather than general theme) here.

Those who prefer to see this as a common rhetorical tradition might respond by pointing out that Paul moves from the discussion of those reserved to the discussion of the olive tree. These seem to be two different topics, so we cannot use the similarity of the wording in Romans 11:4 and 5 to that in Jacob 5 to justify a connection between the two references to olive trees. But in the discussion of the olive tree, Paul’s theme remains those reserved (*kataleípō*: “left behind,” “remaining”). He compares Israel to an olive tree and the Gentiles to branches that are grafted in in an attempt to preserve a remnant. The discussion of the olive tree is a digression from the answer Paul gives to the question with which he begins the chapter (“Has God rejected his people?”). It is a digression that could have been suggested either by the parallel between the language of 1 Kings 19 and Zenos’s parable, or—if the parable itself was

not available to Paul—by a traditional rhetorical connection between the theme of reserving or preserving a remnant and the use of the olive tree metaphor. However, though the *discussion in verses 8 through 24 is a digression from the answer to the original question, it is a digression within the theme of a remnant rather than away from it. The digression illustrates the preservation of the remnant. Though obviously only a conjecture, the availability of Zenos's parable to Paul would explain the juxtaposition of the specific idea of preservation of a remnant with the use of the olive tree metaphor. In any case, something more than general rhetorical tradition seems to be at work here.*

The claim that something more than tradition is at work here is strengthened by additional parallels of detail between Romans 11 and Jacob's sermon (Jacob 4–6). There are several of these, including the reference to the stumbling block (cf. Romans 11:9 and Jacob 4:14) and the recognition of the mystery of God's ways and the advice not to counsel God (Romans 11:20b and 33–34, and Jacob 4:8–10).¹³ Though we have seen that there are significant differences in the context in which Jacob and Paul introduce their references to the olive tree, it is also true that they both do so in response to the same problem, namely, the apostasy of Israel. In Jacob 4:14, Jacob says that Israel “killed the prophets. . . . Wherefore, because of their blindness, . . . they must needs fall; . . . and because they desired it God hath done it, that they may stumble.” The same accusations and claims introduce the metaphor of the olive tree in Romans 11, and in virtually the same order, although more widely separated: Paul specifically mentions killing the prophets (Romans 11:3), the blindness of Israel (Romans 11:7, 8, and 10), and their stumbling (Romans 11:9, 11), and he refers to the consequence as their fall (Romans 11:11). Paul attributes

the agency of these events to God (Romans 11:8: "God hath given them the spirit of slumber"), just as does Jacob in 4:14 ("God hath done it," that is, "delivered many things unto them that they cannot understand").¹⁴

This parallel between the Pauline and Book of Mormon texts is more difficult to explain by a common rhetorical tradition alone. It is true that the conceptual connection between blindness and stumbling is obvious. We see it in such places as Leviticus 19:14, Proverbs 4:19, Isaiah 59:10, and Jeremiah 13:16. Stumbling and falling are often connected (see Jeremiah 46:6; 50:32; Daniel 11:19), even together with murderous enemies (Psalm 27:2; Proverbs 24:17). That two writers would use blindness as a metaphor for sin and a stumbling consequent on blindness as a metaphor for apostasy or falling is perhaps not surprising or indicative of much connection. In addition, Isaiah, for whom we know Nephi and Jacob had profound respect and who was obviously also available to Paul, frequently mentions the blindness and stumbling of Israel (see Isaiah 8:14–15 and 59:10). Perhaps one could explain the appearance of olive tree imagery in Romans and Jacob by the fact that both Jacob and Paul share the book of Isaiah and similar Old Testament texts as background. However, nowhere but in these two texts, Jacob and Romans, do we find this close conjunction of these themes: killing the prophets, blindness, stumbling, and apostasy, as well as an element in these events as the act of God. And, in both cases, the conjunction of these themes is followed by the use of the olive tree metaphor.¹⁵ These factors mitigate the earlier evidence that points away from a common textual connection between Jacob 5 and Romans 11; they point to the possibility of the text of Zenos's parable or a variation of that text, such as perhaps the work of Kenas, as a direct connection between

Romans 11 and Jacob 5. Indeed, the warnings to Israel in the Kenas text state that Israel has “destroyed its own fruit” and “sinned against” God, and ask “will the shepherd destroy his flock?”¹⁶ Like Romans 11:1—which begins with the question “Hath God cast away his people?”—Kenas also answers that God will spare Israel “according to the abundance of his mercy.”¹⁷ Thus, the best explanation is, I believe, that a third text or texts stood between Zenos and Paul. That text could have been a paraphrase or synopsis of Zenos’s work, or perhaps a text on which Zenos’s parable itself depended.

To believe that Zenos’s text—or some version of it—is common to both Paul and Jacob, we must assume that Jacob begins relying on Zenos in Jacob 4, about verse 8, and that Paul has picked up the same themes from the source he shares with Jacob, (1) whether that source is the actual text of Zenos’s prophecy, (2) a third text with the same, perhaps inherited, features, or (3) whether the source is only a rhetorical convention that Paul has inherited from the seventh century B.C. or before. Of these three alternatives, the latter is the least satisfactory because we do not see the conjunction of these details in any other place, leaving too much to coincidence. The first seems to be unsupported by other evidence, such as evidence from other early Christian texts. Thus, in spite of the difficulties with assuming that Paul had access to Zenos’s parable, I think the best explanation of the coincidence of Romans 11:3–11 and Jacob 4:8–18, and of the fact that in each the image of the olive tree is used immediately afterward to illustrate God’s power to save Israel, is that Paul had available a text with the same features that it shares with Zenos’s text. Perhaps that text was a précis of Zenos’s parable or a quotation of it. Perhaps it was an earlier text on which Zenos too relied. Though not

conclusive, there is reasonable evidence for more than a coincidental relationship between the texts of Romans 11 and Jacob 5; Paul's use of the olive tree and Zenos's parable may well be related not just by rhetorical tradition, but by an actual text.¹⁸

Whatever the textual case, whether Jacob and Paul had access to the same text directly, whether (more likely) they had that access through some textual intermediary—such as a quotation in a third text—or whether, least likely, they only share a rhetorical tradition, these passages are also the same at what Augustine called the anagogical level, the level of spiritual significance. Jacob and Paul share, if you will, the anagogical text, as well as any other manuscript text they might have in common. Though that anagogical identity may not establish anything with regard to the question of the textual connection between Romans 11 and Jacob 5, it does show an interdependence of these texts at another level.

The central point of Romans 11 is to be found in verse 5, which I translate: "Even so, at this time, there is a remnant chosen by grace." As Paul makes clear over and over again in Romans, righteousness is a condition of salvation; but he emphasizes here, as he does elsewhere, that the grace of God, not the righteousness of those saved, brings salvation, and that grace is particularly demonstrated in the divine ability to turn the fall of Israel into the salvation of the Gentiles and the grafting or adoption of the Gentiles into the house of Israel. Paul testifies of the Father's power to turn the vagaries of history and sin into blessings for those concerned: the covenant made with the fathers will be fulfilled. That fact serves as both a promise and a blessing to Paul's listeners. The Jews in Paul's audience are reminded that they have a birthright to claim, the birthright given by covenant to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Romans 11:1 and 2).

At the same time, Gentile listeners are promised that they too can have the blessings of that covenant (Romans 11:13, 17, 22, 25, and 30-32). On the other hand, the Jews are reminded that the promise is not made to them individually, but collectively, so they cannot boast in their inheritance (Romans 11:4-5, 7-10), and the Gentiles are reminded that they too must fear (Romans 11:20), for though they have been invited to participate in the inheritance, they may, at any moment, be cut off (Romans 11:22).

Jacob 5 makes a similar point. At the heart of Zenos's parable we find that no tree in the vineyard is worthy to be saved:

And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: Let us go to and hew down the trees of the vineyard and cast them into the fire, that they shall not cumber the ground of my vineyard, for I have done all. What could I have done more for my vineyard? But, behold, the servant said unto the Lord of the vineyard: Spare it a little longer. And the Lord said: Yea, I will spare it a little longer, for it grieveth me that I should lose the trees of my vineyard.

(Jacob 5:49-51; see also verses 26 and 42.)

The unworthiness of the trees in the vineyard brings home to us what has been apparent from the beginning: The Lord of the vineyard works to save the trees, but not for what they presently are.¹⁹ After all, the parable begins with the first tree already being old and decayed (Jacob 5:3), and it shows how that tree and the other resulting trees are often weak and usually produce bad fruit. The Lord saves the trees because he desires their fruit. He labors to save the trees because doing so serves his purposes, namely the production of fruit that he reserves for himself, and he commands his servants to join in that labor. He does not save

the trees because they have some intrinsic value in themselves. The remnant, what is reserved, is chosen by the Lord's grace and power in spite of its unworthiness and decay—not on account of the merit of the trees. Even though labor is demanded, it is not to be confused with merit. In fact, the unworthiness of the trees is what calls forth the need for the righteous work of the Lord and his servants. A clause from Jacob 6:2 serves as a good synopsis of the point Jacob and Paul are making that the salvation of Israel is the Lord's gracious work: "The Lord shall go forth in his power, to nourish and prune his vineyard." He will do what is necessary to fulfill his covenant to Israel.

As in Romans, in Jacob the image of the olive tree serves as both a promise and a warning. Jacob 2:2–3:12 makes it apparent that the Nephites are burdened with sin. In Jacob 4, in an aside to his readers, Jacob follows his sermon on sin with his testimony of Christ, and he points out that, his testimony notwithstanding, there are those who will reject his words, and he offers the Israelites as an example. Chapter 5 follows as a promise to those who will labor in the vineyard, as Jacob 6:3 makes clear. But every divine promise is also a warning, as Jacob 6:3 also shows: "And how blessed are they who have labored diligently in his vineyard; and how cursed are they who shall be cast out into their own place!"

In sum, according to both Zenos and Paul, salvation comes by graceful power, a graceful power that requires our labor with and for our Lord as its consequence. Salvation is promised to those to whom God has covenanted. As Paul has said, "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38–39).



An olive branch in blossom. Paul uses the olive tree to show how Israel will be preserved through an act of God's grace. Few factors in Paul's allegory are present in Jacob 5, and many elements in both accounts are absent in the other, making it difficult to ascertain how the two might be historically related. Perhaps Paul and Zenos had indirect access to a common ancient Israelite textual source.

It is not, however, as easy as one might think to decide just who will be saved or who has been cut off. Salvation is not something we can predict or explain; it often goes against our rational expectations, and it sometimes undoes what seems perfectly apparent to us. Until the harvest, the ripe good fruit cannot be separated from the bitter. Salvation is not something we can earn, but as part of our work as servants in the vineyard, we are nonetheless required to keep the commandments of God if we are to receive his salvation. As Jacob points out, those who labor in the vineyard will be blessed, and we are promised that if we perform the divine labor required of us, we participate in the salvation that God has offered to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob by covenant.

In both Romans and Jacob, and in spite of other differ-

ences, the olive tree reminds us of the mystery that several Old Testament prophets emphasize: the Lord takes responsibility for both the thriving and the death of his covenant people. Jacob says: "And now, my beloved, how is it possible that these, after having rejected the sure foundation, can ever build upon it, that it may become the head of their corner? Behold, my beloved brethren, I will unfold this mystery unto you" (Jacob 4:17–18). The mystery he then unfolds is the parable of the olive trees, in which it becomes clear that the answer is "because the Lord desires it" (see particularly Jacob 5:49 and 50). Paul takes up the same question, "How can Israel be saved, having rejected the Savior who was offered" (cf. Romans 10:21 and 11:1). And Paul gives the same answer as did Jacob: Israel will be saved by the mystery of God's love and desire for his people, a mystery that the figure of the olive tree helps us understand. Both writers reveal a mystery, something hidden from the world and from natural understanding, and both warn us that it is a mystery. Though we look forward to thriving through repentance and the covenants of God and though we can watch that come about, as illustrated with the olive tree, it is not our place to presume to explain why some thrive and others die. We must trust in the covenant the Lord has made to his people, even when we see no hope of that covenant being fulfilled. The botanical anomaly of the parable that wild branches might bear good fruit might well convey a very important message: with God all things are possible.

It is a human temptation to despair in the face of what seem overwhelming odds, in this case, when faced with the sinfulness of the covenant people. Human despair is often exacerbated by our demand for a clear and rational explanation of how such odds are to be overcome and of our failure

to find any answer to that demand. But Jacob reminds his readers of the power of God (Jacob 4:9) and warns them, "Wherefore, brethren, seek not to counsel the Lord" (Jacob 4:10). And, after giving the parable, he says, "O be wise; what can I say more?" (Jacob 6:12). Paul offers a similar warning: Having explained the power of God (Romans 11:11–15) and having illustrated that power by means of the figure of the olive tree (Romans 11:16–19), Paul like so many prophets warns his audience, "Be not highminded, but fear: . . . O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" (Romans 11:20, 33–34). We must trust in the Lord rather than in our own devices.

Paul shares with Zenos and all the prophets of Israel the divine message that salvation comes by God's grace and power, the message that the Lord can and will keep his covenants with his chosen people. Though the process by which salvation comes may be beyond our ken, as the figure of the olive tree shows, Israel can trust the Lord because he has the power to save his people, in spite of what might appear to us to be impossible odds. Our choice is to despair or to trust the Lord, and the scriptures enjoin us to trust and, so, to hope.

Notes

1. See not only the references in Romans 11, such as verses 5 and 6, but also verses 49 through 51 of Jacob 5, where it is clear that the forbearance of the Lord and the consequent salvation is a matter of grace, not merit. The last part of this essay will take up that issue.
2. It may be more accurate to call Jacob 5 a parable rather than an allegory, but the terminology is sufficiently loose that it isn't important to insist on one term or the other.
3. This use of the olive tree in the context of a reference to Baal worship suggests a connection to verses 3 and 4 of Romans 11 where Paul answers the question, "Has God cast off his people?" by

reminding his listeners of the seven thousand who did not bow the knee to Baal (1 Kings 19:10–18).

4. Jeremiah was known to the Nephites (see 1 Nephi 5:13; 7:14; Helaman 8:20). Given Hosea's dates (before 736 B.C.) and the fact that he, like Lehi's family, was a northerner, Hosea's prophecies may also have been available to the Nephites, though I know of no textual evidence for such a claim.

5. Anacoluthon is a rhetorical figure: ending a sentence or clause with a grammatical construction that is different than that with which it began.

6. Bruce W. Jorgenson has written an extensive and provocative unpublished essay on the tree of life, including a discussion of Zenos's parable and the seed that grows into a tree in Alma 32.

7. This complicates any simple interpretation of the parable because it seems to contradict Jacob's identification of the servants and the people he addresses and because it makes difficult any understanding of the burning of the trees.

8. Given the agricultural practice of burning the olive orchard as a means of rejuvenating it, the burning may also suggest renewal. The scriptural ideas of final destruction and renewal are not necessarily incompatible.

9. This also means, of course, that detractors of the Book of Mormon have less textual warrant than they assume if they suppose that Jacob 5 is simply a creative expansion of what Joseph Smith found in Romans 11. A long list of elements has been generated by John W. Welch showing that relatively few of the factors in Romans 11 are present among the main points of the allegory in Jacob 5, and vice versa. For example, in Romans but not in Zenos we find the following phrases or ideas: the casting away of the Jews is the reconciling of the world (11:15); receiving the Jews is life from the dead (11:15); if the first bread is holy, so is the loaf (11:16); if the root is holy, so are the branches (11:16); identifying the Gentiles as a wild tree (11:17); the Gentiles should not be highminded, but fear (11:20); beholding the goodness and severity of God (11:22); all Israel shall be saved (11:26); the Jews are now enemies of the Gentiles (11:28); the Jews are still beloved for their fathers' sake (11:28); the call of God is a gift (11:29); the Gentiles have received mercy through the unbelief of the Jews (11:30); the Jews will receive mercy through the Gentiles' mercy (11:31); and God sees all in unbelief that he may have mercy on all (11:32). Similarly, the following precise or basic elements are important throughout the text of Zenos, but absent in Romans 11: "tame olive tree"; nourishing; "waxed old"; "decay"; pruning; dig-

ging about; shooting forth young and tender branches; “main top”; planting or grafting young shoots whithersoever one wants; working to preserve the roots; nethermost part(s) of the vineyard; poor spot of ground; preserving the natural branches; laying up fruit, desiring good fruit; long passages of time; behavior of fruit on a graft; one tree bringing forth both good fruit and bad fruit at the same time; the top “overruns the roots”; “good for nothing”; “loftiness of the vineyard”; branches grow faster than the strength of the roots; wild fruit is “bitter”; “mother tree”; “trim up the branches that are ripened”; a change in the nature of the branches affects the root; if one clears the bad out too quickly, the root will be too strong and will kill the graft; keeping the root and the top equal; burning the bad wood; master of the vineyard; and servant(s).

10. For further discussions of this tradition, see the articles by David Seely, John Welch, and John Tvedtnes in this volume.

11. Paul speaks as if his audience already knows that they have been grafted in; he gives little detail about the natural tree or the wild branches, and he abruptly begins by assuming a given conditional, “If some of the branches were broken off. . . .” Such points have led New Testament scholars to comment that Paul’s allegory limps for lack of sufficient detail, or to see it as oddly imported into the discussion, “a motif alien to Paul’s purpose,” W. D. Davies, *Jewish and Pauline Studies* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 159; others speculate about the sources that Paul was taking for granted, suggesting passages in the Old Testament, the Dead Sea Scrolls, Philo, and others; Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 308; Anthony Tyrell Hanson, *Studies in Paul’s Technique and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 120–21; H. J. Schoeps, *Paul* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), 242 n. 5. All this gives the impression that Paul presumed that his audience knew in general the metaphor that he was invoking.

12. The phrase, “preserve . . . unto myself,” is found in Jacob 5:8, 11, 13, 46, 53, 54, 75, and 77. “Lay up . . . unto myself” is found in Jacob 5:13, 18, 19, 29, 71, and 76.

13. Consider, however, that the advice not to counsel the Lord is followed in Zenos’s text by a story in which the servant does counsel the Lord, both unsuccessfully (Jacob 5:21–22) and successfully (Jacob 5:48–51). At least part of the parable of the olive tree seems to be a message about how the servants of God can counsel with him.

14. This is the key point of both the Romans and the Jacob passage. See a similar theme in Exodus 8:19; Deuteronomy 2:30; 2 Chronicles 30:7; Psalm 80:12; and perhaps Mormon 5:16.

15. Note that the first edition of the Book of Mormon follows the manuscript in not making a chapter split between Jacob 4 and 5. This suggests that Jacob 4:14 is more closely connected to the parable that follows than contemporary chapter and verse division would indicate.

16. *Pseudo-Philo* 28:45, in James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 2:341.

17. *Ibid.*

18. Given the evidence on both sides, detractors of the Book of Mormon will have difficulty explaining the points of connection between Romans and Jacob as merely Joseph Smith's creative use of Romans, just as no definite conclusion can be reached about the textual connection between Zenos and Paul either.

19. Regarding the unworthiness of the trees, note the decay of the olive tree (Jacob 5:3) and the fact that the Lord comes to work the vineyard with the servant. These two things may imply the failure of the previous laborers to care properly for the tree. If so, then we see in the parable—and in Jacob's call to his listeners to be servants and to work faithfully in the vineyard (Jacob 6:2–3)—a call to join in the work by which the Lord's saving grace comes to pass, the work of preserving a remnant. After all, *labor* is one of the most common and important words of this parable.

16

Romans 11:17–24: A Bibliography of Commentaries

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17

Borrowings from the Parable of Zenos

John A. Tvedtnes

Critics of the Book of Mormon have attributed Zenos's parable of the olive tree in Jacob 5 to the idea that Joseph Smith borrowed its essence from various New Testament passages.¹ Indeed, the grafting of the branches appears to be related to Paul's comments in Romans 11:17–24, while some of the wording of Jacob 5 is very much like that found in Luke 13:6–8 and Isaiah 5:1–5.

But many New Testament scholars have conceded that Paul's olive branch analogy was inspired by the Old Testament, specifically by Exodus 15:17. It is my opinion that Paul was more likely inspired by the writings of Zenos. Here are some of my reasons for this belief:

- Some 28 percent of the verses in Romans 11 are known quotes from the Old Testament. In the two previous chapters (9–10), the percentage is even higher.² Clearly, Paul relied heavily on the writings of earlier prophets to provide evidence for the points he was making.

- There are also ties between Jacob's introduction to the parable of Zenos in Jacob 4 and some of Paul's statements in Romans 11, leading one to believe that they may have had a common source.³ Note, for example, the close similarity in the wording of Romans 11:34–36 (cf. Romans 11:22), which Paul borrowed from Isaiah 40:13, 28 (cf. Psalm 145:3), and Jacob 4:8–10. Paul wrote of the killing of Israel's

prophets (Romans 11:3), citing 1 Kings 19:14; Jacob did likewise (Jacob 4:13–15), though he did not draw on the same passage. Paul wrote that Israel had been partly blinded or calloused (Romans 11:7, 25); Jacob wrote of the blindness of the Jews (Jacob 4:14).⁴ Both Paul (Romans 11:15–16) and Jacob (Jacob 4:11–12) wrote of the firstfruit (Christ) in terms of the resurrection.

- The fact that a number of Old Testament and other pre-Pauline passages refer to olive and other branches in terms similar to those used by both Paul and Zenos suggests that there may be a common tradition for all of these passages. We shall refer to these other sources throughout this study.⁵

- The Zenos parable is self-contained and presents a logical flow, despite the fact that parts of it resemble various Bible passages attributed to different authors. This suggests (1) that the Zenos parable found in Jacob 5 is the original, and (2) that other writers (including Paul) borrowed elements of the Zenos parable and adapted them to suit their own purposes.⁶

We shall examine various biblical and other passages whose words and themes bear a resemblance to the Zenos parable in an effort to establish the antiquity of the ideas found in Jacob 5 and to attempt to ascertain whether the ancient writers were aware of the parable.

UNDERSTANDING ZENOS

In order to determine which Bible passages are related to the parable of Zenos, we must first understand the meaning of that parable. Jacob, after reciting the parable, explained that Zenos likened “the house of Israel . . . unto a tame olive-tree,” and that the vineyard in which the trees

were planted was “the world [which] shall be burned with fire” (Jacob 6:1–4).

Jacob continued his explanation by using elements also found in Lehi’s vision of the tree of life (1 Nephi 8). He noted the invitation to come to God (Jacob 6:5), similar to Lehi’s invitation to his family (1 Nephi 8:15–18). He exhorted his audience to cleave to God (Jacob 6:5); Lehi had seen people clinging to the rod of iron (1 Nephi 8:24, 30), which Nephi identified as the word of God (1 Nephi 15:23–24). Like Lehi (1 Nephi 8:20–21), Jacob spoke of a “narrow” way leading to “eternal life” (Jacob 6:11). Those who followed the path in Lehi’s vision partook of the fruit of the tree of life (1 Nephi 8:24, 30). Nephi learned that the tree symbolized “the love of God,” as represented by Christ (1 Nephi 11:21–23, 25). Jacob told his audience that they (like the tree in the Zenos parable) had “been nourished by the good word of God” (Jacob 6:7), but that some had rejected “the words which have been spoken concerning Christ” and had even made “a mock of the great plan of redemption” (Jacob 6:8). In Lehi’s vision, too, there were people who mocked those who came to partake of the fruit of the tree (1 Nephi 8:27). The fruit of the tree is described in similar terms by Lehi (1 Nephi 8:10–12), Nephi (1 Nephi 11:8–9) and Zenos (Jacob 5:61).

But there is more direct evidence that Lehi’s vision of the tree of life is related to the parable of Zenos. Immediately after recounting his dream, Lehi spoke to his family of the captivity and the gathering of Israel and of the coming of the Messiah (1 Nephi 10:2–4). His teachings make it clear that he was aware of Zenos’s parable:

Yea, even my father spake much concerning the Gentiles, and also concerning the house of Israel, that they should be compared like unto an olive-tree, whose

branches should be broken off and should be scattered upon all the face of the earth. Wherefore, he said it must needs be that we should be led with one accord into the land of promise, unto the fulfilling of the word of the Lord, that we should be scattered upon all the face of the earth. And after the house of Israel should be scattered they should be gathered together again; or, in fine, after the Gentiles had received the fulness of the Gospel, the natural branches of the olive-tree, or the remnants of the house of Israel, should be grafted in, or come to the knowledge of the true Messiah, their Lord and their Redeemer. (1 Nephi 10:12–14.)

Though Lehi identified the tree as Israel, yet the return of the scattered “natural branches” is said to represent Israel’s coming “to the knowledge of the true Messiah.”⁷ This parallels a later statement that those who accept the gospel are “as a branch grafted into the true vine” (Alma 16:16–17), who is Jesus Christ (John 15:1–8).⁸ On another occasion, Ammon specifically identified the descendants of Lehi as a “people, who are a branch of the tree of Israel . . . lost from its body in a strange land” (Alma 26:36). He may have been influenced by Lehi’s statement to his sons that their ancestor “Joseph . . . obtained a promise of the Lord, that out of the fruit of his loins the Lord God would raise up a righteous branch unto the house of Israel . . . a branch which was to be broken off” (2 Nephi 3:5).

Jacob, long before recording the Zenos parable, had also given a discourse in which he said of the Nephites, “in future generations they shall become a righteous branch unto the house of Israel” (2 Nephi 9:53). The following day, he continued his discussion “concerning this righteous branch of which [he had] spoken” (2 Nephi 10:1). He explained that he had reference to the restoration of his people’s descendants “to that which will give them the true

knowledge of their Redeemer" (2 Nephi 10:2). He then drew upon Isaiah 49 (which he had quoted) to discuss the scattering and gathering of Israel (2 Nephi 10:6–8) and spoke of the Gentiles being "blessed and numbered among the house of Israel" (2 Nephi 10:18). This reminds us of the wild olive branches grafted into the tree in Zenos's parable (Jacob 5:10, 17). Jacob further spoke of his people, saying that they had not been "cast off," but merely "driven out of the land of our inheritance . . . to a better land" (2 Nephi 10:20). The "better land" resembles the "good spot of ground" to which, as Zenos prophesied (Jacob 5:25, 43), Lehi's family had been taken. But other Israelites, too, had been "led away from time to time" and "broken off," according to Jacob (2 Nephi 10:22). The branch analogy appears to have been on his mind during the entire discourse.

Jacob's teachings in 2 Nephi 9–10 appear to have been influenced by what he had heard from his father. In a subsequent discourse—again delivered prior to the recording of the Zenos parable—he said, "Wherefore, thus saith the Lord, I have led this people forth out of the land of Jerusalem, by the power of mine arm, that I might raise up unto me a righteous branch from the fruit of the loins of Joseph" (Jacob 2:25).

The most comprehensive explanation of the Zenos parable, however, is the one given by Nephi to his brothers in 1 Nephi 15:10–22. Laman and Lemuel asked the meaning of their father's words "concerning the natural branches of the olive-tree, and also concerning the Gentiles" (1 Nephi 15:7). Nephi replied that "the house of Israel was compared unto an olive-tree . . . and behold are we not broken off from the house of Israel, and are we not a branch of the house of Israel?" (1 Nephi 15:12). The "grafting in of the natural

branches," he explained, referred to the acceptance of "the gospel of the Messiah" by the Gentiles and the realization of Lehi's descendants that "they are of the house of Israel," that they might "come to the knowledge of their forefathers, and also to the knowledge of the gospel of their Redeemer" (1 Nephi 15:13–14). Thus they would "receive the strength and nourishment from the true vine" and "come unto the true fold of God" (1 Nephi 15:15). Again, the tree seems to represent both Israel as a people and Christ.⁹

Nephi continued his explanation by noting that the lost remnants of "the house of Israel . . . shall be grafted in, being a natural branch of the olive-tree, into the true olive-tree," in fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham that through his descendants "shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed" (1 Nephi 15:16–18).¹⁰

After Nephi had explained the scattering of Israel and the grafting in of the branches, his brothers asked about the tree that their father had seen in vision. It seems evident that they saw a connection between Lehi's vision and the parable of the olive tree. Nephi told them that "it was a representation of the tree of life" (1 Nephi 15:21–22).

Joseph Smith identified the tree of life with the olive tree when he designated D&C 88 (see its preface) as an "olive leaf . . . plucked from the Tree of Paradise, the Lord's message of peace to us." In early Jewish and Christian tradition, the tree of life is sometimes considered to be an olive tree,¹¹ around which is entwined the vine, often believed to be the tree of knowledge. Nibley has pointed out¹² that, in the artwork of the third-century A.D. Dura-Europos synagogue, the tree of life is depicted as both a tree and a vine. (Thus the olive tree is not out of place in the vineyard.)

Just before quoting Isaiah 48–49 to his brothers, Nephi said, "Hear ye the words of the prophet, ye who are a rem-

nant of the house of Israel, a branch who have been broken off" (1 Nephi 19:24). These words were evidently inspired by wording at the beginning of Isaiah 49:1 as found on the brass plates of Laban, but not included in our Bible versions: "Hearken, O ye house of Israel, all ye that are broken off and are driven out . . . all ye that are broken off, that are scattered abroad, who are of my people, O house of Israel" (1 Nephi 21:1).

Throughout these two chapters of Isaiah, we find imagery that the prophet may have borrowed from Zenos. In Isaiah 49:3–4 (cf. 1 Nephi 21:3–4), the Lord said, "Thou art my servant, O Israel," whereupon the prophet replied, "I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for naught." We are reminded of the labors in the vineyard, which seemed to be for naught (Jacob 5:29–35). Isaiah 49:8–9 (cf. 1 Nephi 21:8–9) indicates that the people are "to inherit the desolate heritages. . . . Their pastures shall be in all high places." The "high places" remind us of the "loftiness of [the] vineyard" (Jacob 5:48), while the "desolate heritages" resemble the "poor spot of ground" in the vineyard (Jacob 5:21–23). Similarly, in Isaiah 49:19 (cf. 1 Nephi 21:19), we read of "thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction." Isaiah 48:1 (cf. 1 Nephi 20:1) speaks of the Israelites who "come forth out of the waters of Judah," reminding us of the river or fountain of water near the tree of life in Lehi's vision (1 Nephi 8:13–14) and in the description of the Garden of Eden, where the tree was planted (Genesis 2:8–14). Note the heat, the sun, and the springs of water in Isaiah 49:10.

Following his reading of these two chapters of Isaiah, Nephi gave an explanation (1 Nephi 22), in which he spoke of the scattering and gathering of Israel, which fulfills the covenant to Abraham that "in thy seed shall all the kin-

dreds of the earth be blessed" (1 Nephi 22:9). This is the same thing he said in explanation of the broken branches of the tree in 1 Nephi 15:16–18. He further explained that when they are gathered the Israelites "shall know that the Lord is their Savior and their Redeemer, the Mighty One of Israel" (1 Nephi 22:12). This reminds us of his explanation of the gathered branches in 1 Nephi 15:14–16. As in the Zenos parable (Jacob 5:37, 42, 46–47, 49, 66, 77) and elsewhere, Nephi added that the wicked would burn while the righteous would be saved (1 Nephi 22:15, 17–18).

NEW USES OF THE PARABLE

By their very nature, parables lend themselves to reinterpretation and new uses. This is illustrated by Alma's use of Zenos's imagery in his discussion of faith (Alma 32). He likened faith to a seed that, when planted and properly cared for, grows into a tree.¹³ "As the tree beginneth to grow," Alma told his audience,

Ye will say: Let us nourish it with great care, that it may get root, that it may grow up, and bring forth fruit unto us. And now behold, if ye nourish it with much care it will get root, and grow up, and bring forth fruit. But if ye neglect the tree, and take no thought for its nourishment, behold it will not get any root; and when the heat of the sun cometh and scorcheth it, because it hath no root it withers away, and ye pluck it up and cast it out. (Alma 32:37–38.)

Alma's admonition to nourish the tree (also found in Alma 32:42) reminds us of the care given the trees by the lord of the vineyard in Zenos's parable, where the word "nourish" is also used.¹⁴ In both cases, unfruitful trees/branches are plucked up and cast out (Jacob 5:66, 73, 77).¹⁵ As Zenos spoke of the "poor spot of ground" (Jacob

5:21–23), Alma spoke of barren ground (Alma 32:39). As the lord of the vineyard devoted much time to the care of his trees, in anticipation of fruit (Jacob 5:13, 18–20, 23, 27, 29, 31, 33, 54, 60, 71, 74–76), Alma admonished his audience to “patience, looking forward to the fruit thereof” (Alma 32:41; cf. 32:40–43). Moreover, Alma noted that by nourishing the word “ye can . . . pluck of the fruit of the tree of life . . . it shall be a tree springing up unto everlasting life” (Alma 32:40–41; cf. Alma 33:23).¹⁶ His description of the fruit of the tree (Alma 32:42) is identical to that given for the fruit of the tree of life seen in vision by Lehi (1 Nephi 8:10–12; cf. Jacob 5:61).

As we examine biblical and pseudepigraphic passages that may have drawn on the parable of Zenos, it becomes clear that Alma was not alone in finding new analogies for the parable of the vineyard. Indeed, he was preceded by the author of Proverbs, who wrote, “Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life. Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded. The law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death” (Proverbs 13:12–14; cf. 15:4).

Paul told the Colossian Saints that they were “rooted and built up” in Christ “and stablished in the faith” (Colossians 2:6–7). The reference to faith reminds us of Alma’s use of the tree of life as a symbol of faith. A similar statement by Paul appears in his epistle to the Ephesians, written at the same time as the one to the Colossians: “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend . . . And to know the love of Christ . . . that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God” (Ephesians 3:17–19). This passage resembles both Alma’s discussion of the seed of

faith planted in the heart and Nephi's understanding that the tree of life is a symbol of the love of Christ (1 Nephi 11:21–22).¹⁷

CHRIST AS THE TREE AND THE VINE

The tree or vine typically represents nations (usually Israel) in Old and New Testament prophecies and parables. But it sometimes represents the King of Israel, Jesus Christ. It is perhaps significant that he should be compared to both a tree and a vine, in view of the fact that in the parable of Zenos the olive tree is planted in a vineyard.

Jeremiah termed the Messiah "a righteous Branch" (Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15). Isaiah, in his famous prophecy of Christ, wrote that "he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground" (Isaiah 53:2). In another passage, he wrote that "there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots," and tied the concept of the "root of Jesse" to the gathering of Israel in the last days (Isaiah 11:1–13). In Doctrine and Covenants 113, Christ is identified as the stem of Jesse. He made this same identification when he told John, "I am the root and the offspring of David" (Revelation 22:16).¹⁸ In Romans 15:12 (four chapters after the parable of the grafted branches), Paul cited Isaiah 11:10 and identified Christ as the root of Jesse.

The Epistle to the Hebrews cites Psalm 110:4 in reference to Christ (Hebrews 7:17). In this connection, we should also note the wording of Psalm 110:2–3: "The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion. . . . Thou hast the dew of thy youth." Psalm 110:7 adds, "He shall drink of the brook in the way." These verses resemble biblical passages to be discussed later, which compare the righteous man to a well-watered tree.

In a passage reminiscent of the parable of Zenos, Christ identified himself as the plant of which his disciples are the branches:

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. . . . Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. . . . Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. (John 15:1–2, 4–6, 8.)

As in the parable of Zenos, the branches take strength from the main plant (in this case a vine) and bear good fruit (cf. Jacob 5:18), while the unfruitful branches are removed and burned in the fire (Jacob 5:7, 26, 37, 42, 45–47, 49). Another feature shared by the two passages is that God is the husbandman (cf. Jacob 6:2, 4). The designation of Christ as “the true vine” is also found in the Book of Mormon (1 Nephi 15:15; Alma 16:16–17).

Significantly, the greatest act of “the true vine” took place at the “mount of olives,”¹⁹ in a place called Gethsemane, meaning “oil press,” though the Hebrew behind the first element of the name usually refers to a winepress (Matthew 26:36; Luke 22:39; John 18:1). There, pressed under the weight of the sins of the world, he shed blood at every pore (Luke 22:44; Mosiah 3:7; D&C 19:18), like a grape in the press.

Just before going to Gethsemane, Christ had washed his apostles’ feet (John 13) and given them bread and wine as

symbols of his body and blood (Luke 22:14–20). The choice of these elements, at least as old as Melchizedek and Abraham (Genesis 14:18), was deliberate. The Hebrew term *lehem*, “bread,” originally meant “flesh,” and is therefore a fitting symbol of Christ’s body, as well as the second element in the name of the place where he was born, Bethlehem (“house of flesh/bread”).

The usual Hebrew term for “wine” is possibly a borrowing from the Greek, or both the Hebrew and Greek are borrowed from a common Mediterranean source. The earliest Hebrew term denoting wine appears to be “blood of grapes” (Genesis 49:11; Deuteronomy 32:14). In Jewish tradition, the Messiah is to come dressed in a red garment. This is based on Isaiah 63:2–3, where the garment is red because he has trodden the winepress. In Revelation 14:8, 19–20; 19:15, the content of the winepress is said to be blood.

It was while his blood dripped in Gethsemane, amid the olive trees, that Christ asked the Father, “Remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:42).²⁰ The cup of the indignation or wrath of God is, in the scriptures, filled with wine or blood (Isaiah 51:17, 22; Jeremiah 25:15; Revelation 14:10; 16:19; 17:4; 18:6; cf. Matthew 20:22–23).

THE SYRIAC FATHERS

Early Syriac Christian Fathers, such as Ephrem, Aphrahat, and Isaac of Antioch, drew upon the imagery of Christ as the true vine in explaining the role of Christianity as a replacement for Judaism. Christ is compared to a sweet grape in the midst of a cluster of sour grapes (Israel) that was uprooted from the vineyard. This single grape preserved the blessings of ancient Israel for the Gentiles, who

were grafted in.²¹ Thus, the concept of grafting branches to the olive tree in Romans 11 was applied to Jesus' account of the vineyard in John 15.

Aphrahat, in his treatise "On the Sons of the Covenant," after comparing Christians to laborers (in terms reminiscent of the parable of the laborers in the vineyard in Matthew 20:1–16), wrote, "Our Lord has hired us for his vineyard. Let us be planted as vines in his vineyard, who [which?] is the true Vine(yard). Let us be good vines, that we be not uprooted from that vineyard."²²

In this passage, Christians are both vinedressers and vines. In an address to the clergy, Aphrahat wrote, "You are vines in the vineyard, seed of good wheat, bearing fruit a hundredfold." A short while after this, he wrote of Christ, "He is the true Vine[yard] and his Father is the Vinedresser: and we are the vines planted in his [its] midst."²³

Especially relevant to the Zenos parable is a hymn that follows Ephrem's collection *On Paradise*. He wrote of the tree with "heavenly roots" and of "the Branch of Truth." The fifth stanza speaks of the "sons of Truth on that branch of Truth," who "ripened into fruit fit for the Kingdom. Yet though the branch is alive there are also on it fruits [which are] dead, only outwardly blooming. The wind tested them and shook off the shrivelled," in a manner reminiscent of the triage of the fruit of the olive tree in Jacob 5. The allusion is to Matthew 21:42 and John 15:5. Murray noted that the word rendered "shrivelled" really means "wild grapes."²⁴ This conforms to the "wild fruit" on the tree described by Zenos (Jacob 5:40) and to the "wild grapes" in Isaiah 5:4.

The eighth stanza of Ephrem's hymn speaks of people who came to the branch, "ate and were filled, but turned and insulted it," while stanza eleven, speaking of the

"Branch of Life," discusses of those "who came by, picked the fruit, then abandoned the vines," in contrast with the "vinedressers [who] persevere in his vineyard." Stanza thirteen likewise denounces the "workers in the vineyard . . . that only picked and carried off" but did not remain to work. We are reminded of those who, after eating the fruit of the tree in Lehi's vision, became ashamed and abandoned it (1 Nephi 8:24–25). That Ephrem's vine/tree is the tree of life is evidenced by the fact that the tree, after being rejected by others, bent down to take Adam back to Eden.

Stanza nine speaks of the greatness of the branch, noting that "whoever does not wish to grasp its greatness imagines in his weakness it is a feeble branch." They are like the people in Lehi's vision who did not grasp the iron rod. Stanza ten of Ephrem's hymn continues the thought, speaking of those who persevere "on that branch of Truth which sustains the true, casts away the false." Israel was "cast . . . away" in a process that "shakes off the shrivelled and ripens the true. Blessed be he who rejected the vineyard for being a source of wild grapes!" The pruning of the branches is a thought shared by Zenos (Jacob 5:4–5, 11, 47, 64, 69, 76).

The vine imagery from John 15 was applied by Ephrem to the olive tree, whose "leaves stand fast" through winter. These, he notes, "are an image of the faithful who persevere in Christ the Olive," while "the faithless have fallen like leaves." The Christians who hang on Christ "are like olive-leaves in winter . . . planted wholly in him."²⁵ Aphrahat and Cyril of Jerusalem used olive symbolism to denote Christ as the source of the sacraments.

Ephrem also treated the vineyard story of Isaiah 5 in the same way Paul dealt with the olive tree in Romans 11. The problem of the "wild grapes," he wrote, is solved. "Graft

into its vines thy grafting-slips," that the vine may bear fruit "for the Lord of the vineyard who threatened it!"²⁶ The concepts of bearing fruit for the lord of the vineyard and of his thoughts about destroying the vineyard are shared with Zenos (Jacob 5:13, 18–20, 23, 27, 29, 31, 46, 60, 71, 76–77). In the same work, Ephrem wrote of "the vine [of] our Lord, the Vine[yard] of Truth," where "souls have become like grafting-slips." After causing a vineyard (Israel) to prosper, the Lord "ruined a vineyard that yielded wild grapes" and "uprooted it."²⁷ These, too, are features of Zenos's parable (Jacob 5:18, 25–26, 37, 40, 42, 45–47, 49, 58, 65–66, 69, 73, 77).

Of particular interest is the twenty-first *Memra* of the *Liber Graduum*, entirely on the tree of life, which identifies the tree with Christ. "The good tree is there in that world of light. . . . He is the Tree of Life, giving life to all things by his fruits."²⁸

From these examples, we see that, in many respects, the commentaries of the Syriac Fathers go beyond Isaiah 5, Matthew 21, and Romans 11, and include elements found in the Zenos account in Jacob 5.

PEOPLE COMPARED TO TREES

Throughout the Bible, people are compared to trees, branches, and roots, as in the Zenos parable.²⁹ Scholars typically trace this imagery to Exodus 15:17, where Moses said of Israel, "Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance."

Like unfruitful trees, the wicked are often burned in both the Bible and in pseudepigraphic literature. In *Pseudo-Philo*, we read that Kenaz, upon his election as judge, sought out the wicked of the people. "Even if someone from my own household comes out in the lot of sin, he will not be saved but will be burned in the fire," he declared.³⁰ After

shutting the sinners up in prison, he said, "Did not Moses the friend of the Lord speak about these people, saying, 'Lest there be among you a root bearing poison and bitterness'?"³¹ They were then burned.³²

Job 15:20–34, speaking of "the wicked man," said that "his branch shall not be green" and will be consumed by flames—elements found in Jacob 5:26, 37, 40, 42, 45–47, 49, 58, 66, 77. He is compared to a vine that loses its unripe grapes and to an olive tree that loses its flowers. Similarly, Job 18:14–16 says of the wicked man that "his confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle. . . . Brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation. His roots shall be dried up beneath, and above shall his branch be cut off."

Jude 1:12 describes the wicked in similar terms, comparing them to "trees whose fruit withered, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots." A comparable passage is found in Psalm 52:5, 8: "God shall likewise destroy thee for ever, he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place, and root thee out of the land of the living. . . . But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God." The fate of the wicked in these passages corresponds to the threat made in Jacob 5 to uproot the unproductive branches (Jacob 5:7–9, 26, 42, 44–47, 49, 57–58, 65–66, 69, 73, 75, 77).

In contrast to the fate of the wicked, "the righteous shall flourish as a branch; . . . the fruit of the righteous is a tree of life" (Proverbs 11:28, 30); and "the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit" (Proverbs 12:12). "A man shall not be established by wickedness: but the root of the righteous shall not be moved" (Proverbs 12:3). In Psalm 128:3, the righteous man is promised, "Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table." In *Pseudo-Philo* 50:1, Peninah calls the barren Hanna "a dry tree," but says that her own sons are "like

a plantation of olive trees."³³ In 1 Enoch 93:2, the righteous are termed "a plant of truth."³⁴

Job said, "My root was spread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch" (Job 29:19). This agrees with the description of the righteous man in Psalm 1:3: "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."³⁵ Jeremiah evidently borrowed from this Psalm when he wrote:

Cursed be the man that trusteth in man. . . . For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit. . . . I the Lord . . . give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings. (Jeremiah 17:5–8, 10.)³⁶

The same concept is reflected in the pseudepigraphic book of *Aḥiqar*:

O my boy! I brought thee up with the best upbringing and trained thee like a tall cedar; and thou hast twisted and bent me. . . . And Haiqar said to him, "Thou art like the tree which was fruitless beside the water, and its master was fain to cut it down, and it said to him, 'Remove me to another place, and if I do not bear fruit, cut me down.' And its master said to it, 'Thou being beside the water hast not borne fruit, how shalt thou bear fruit when thou art in another place?'"³⁷

There are several elements here that resemble the Zenos

parable. The young man is compared to a tree that, though planted in a good spot, is fruitless (cf. Jacob 5:25, 43). He begs to be removed to another place, reminding us that some of the cuttings in Jacob 5 produced well in barren spots (cf. Jacob 5:21–22).

The author of Psalm 52 compared himself to “a green olive tree in the house of God” (Psalm 52:8). In his vision of the future temple, Zechariah saw two olive trees beside the candlestick, which is a representation of the tree of life, with its seven branches (Zechariah 4:2-3).³⁸ When he asked the angel what the trees meant, he was told that “these are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth” (Zechariah 4:11–14).³⁹ In a similar vision of the future temple, John was told that the “two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth” were “two witnesses” or “prophets” who should defend the Jews against their enemies in the last days before being slain and then restored to life (Revelation 11:1–12).

That the “anointed ones” of Zechariah’s prophecy should be represented by olive trees is significant because the anointing is with olive oil. A similar idea is found in Judges 9:8–15, a parable in which the trees, wanting a king, offered to “anoint” the olive tree, source of the anointing oil. The olive tree declined the offer, which was then made to the fig tree and the vine (each of which also refused the honor) and then the bramble (which accepted). The olive tree is clearly Gideon who, though qualified to serve as king, declined the position for himself and his descendants (Judges 8:22–23). The fig tree and the vine perhaps represent Gideon’s offspring.⁴⁰ The parable was told by one of Gideon’s sons, Jotham, in order to refute the royal claims of his half-brother Abimelech, who is the bramble (Judges

9:1–6), as Jotham’s explanation of the parable makes clear (Judges 9:16–20).

Jotham’s parable contains two other elements found also in the parable of Zenos. It mentions “good fruit” (Judges 9:11) and speaks of a fire devouring the trees. However, the fruit belongs to the fig tree, while the trees devoured by the fire are cedars (Judges 9:15).⁴¹

Jotham’s parable, while bearing a few resemblances to that of Zenos, was particularly suited to the occasion, and may not be dependent on Zenos at all.⁴² One is tempted to suggest, however, that Zenos may have been influenced by Jotham. Significantly, both appear to have been of the tribe of Manasseh.⁴³ Might Zenos have been a descendant of Jotham? Or could Jotham have counted Zenos among his fathers?

Nibley likened Zenos’s olive tree allegory to the *Thanksgiving Hymns* from Qumran, wherein well-watered trees in the desert are the righteous in the world, whereas the wicked are cut down and burned.⁴⁴ Of those who follow God’s counsel, *Thanksgiving Hymn 10* says:

[For these hast Thou planted a tree] which blooms with flowers unfading, whose boughs put forth thick leaves, which stands firm-planted for ever, and gives shade to all []; [whose branches tower] to hea[ven], whose roots sink down to the abyss. All the rivers of Eden [water] its boughs; it thrives beyond [all bounds], [burgeons beyond all] measure. [Its branches stretch] endless across the world, [and its roots go down] to the nethermost depths. Moreover, there shall well forth for them a fountain of light, a perpetual spring unfailing. Howbeit, in its [fiery] sparks all [infamous] men shall be burned; it shall be as a flame devouring the guilty, until they are destroyed.⁴⁵

The author continued by stating his reliance on God “to

bring [what I have plan]ted to flower, to make the shoot to grow."⁴⁶ Elements that the hymn shares with the Zenos parable include the tall branches, the watering by the rivers of Eden, and the burning of the wicked.

Thanksgiving Hymn 14 also has elements found in the Zenos parable and Lehi's vision, such as the stream that waters the trees and the tree of life, which apparently represents the Messiah (being called the "stock of Truth").

I give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, because, in a dry place, thou hast set me beside a fountain; in an arid land, beside a spring; in a de[sert], beside an oasis; like one of those evergreen trees—fir or pine or cypress—planted together to Thy glory, which, hidden 'mid other trees—trees that stand beside water—are fed from a secret spring, and which put forth blossom unfading upon an eternal trunk, striking firm root ere they burgeon, spreading their roots to the stream; a tree whose stem is exposed to living waters and whose stock lies beside a perpetual fount; a tree on whose flowering leaves all the beasts of the woodland can feed; whose roots are so widespread that all wayfarers cannot but tread them; upon whose dangling boughs there is room for every bird.

The "other trees . . . that stand beside water" rail against the tree, "which puts forth the shoot of Holiness upon the stock of Truth," because they cannot have access to the water. That the tree in question is the tree of life is evidenced by the fact that its fruit has been hedged "by the mystic power of stalwart angels, by holy spirits, and by a flaming sword turning this way and that" so that the wicked "may not [drink] from the Fountain of Life." The trees of the wicked will be burned by fire "and they shall wither, and the planting of that fruit [prove in vain]," while the trees of the righteous are to bloom forever, "their roots . . . firmly set and their trees planted in line of the sun, in

light [unfailing;] that their [boughs] may yield glorious foliage." As long as the author works to preserve the tree, it flourishes, but when he slackens off, the tree turns to "briars and brambles" and he becomes "like a man abandoned in [a desert]." ⁴⁷ In this respect, the tree of life is like the tree of faith planted in the heart, as described in Alma 32; without nourishment, it cannot flourish.

Thanksgiving Hymn 16 from the Qumran scroll has the writer declaring, "Wherefore, with heart exposed to a spring unfailing, drawing my strength from on high, I shall blossom like a lily, [while all the fruit of the wicked shall be but travail] and woe; they shall wither like a flower before [the heat]." ⁴⁸

Elsewhere, Nibley has suggested that the writer of the hymns may have been Zenos himself, since many of the other sayings attributed to Zenos in the Book of Mormon parallel statements found in the Qumran hymns. ⁴⁹ If this assessment is correct, the presence of so many parallels between Jacob 5 and some of the hymns (notably 10 and 14) is more than coincidence.

THE PLANTING OF THE LORD

"Thou hast planted them, yea, they have taken root: they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit" (Jeremiah 12:2). Like Jeremiah, a number of biblical authors stressed that it was God who planted Israel. ⁵⁰ Micah spoke of Israel's capital Samaria as "plantings of a vineyard" (Micah 1:5–6). Through Isaiah, the Lord called Israel "the branch of my planting" (Isaiah 60:21) and noted that Israel was to "be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord" (Isaiah 61:3). The Lord addressed Judah in the words, "Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how

then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?" (Jeremiah 2:21).

This concern that a planting of the Lord should not produce good fruit is frequently repeated throughout the Bible. Isaiah, declaring that "the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant,"⁵¹ compared Israel to a "vineyard in a very fruitful hill," whose owner, having worked hard to prepare the spot, "planted it with the choicest vine . . . and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes." In words reminiscent of Jacob 5:41, he declared, "What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?" Like the lord of the vineyard in Jacob 5, he proposed destroying the vineyard, that "it shall not be pruned, nor digged" (Isaiah 5:1-7). Later in the same chapter, he spoke of the captivity of Israel (Isaiah 5:13) and of "the fire [that] devoureth the stubble, and the flame [that] consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness and their blossom shall go up as dust" (Isaiah 5:24; verses 25-30 describe a foreign invasion, the means by which Israel was scattered).

Jesus, evidently borrowing from Isaiah's parable,⁵² compared God to "a certain householder, which planted a vineyard . . . and let it out to husbandmen," expecting to "receive the fruits of it" (Matthew 21:33-45). Though his parable has a different point, it is clear that the vineyard represents the people of Israel and the husbandmen its leaders, while the servants whom they slew were the prophets and the son, Jesus himself.⁵³

In explaining the parable (Matthew 21:42), Jesus cited the passage about the rejected cornerstone⁵⁴ from Psalm 118:22-23, which Jacob had used to preface his record of

Zenos's account of the olive tree parable (Jacob 4:15–18).⁵⁵ This is one of the Hallel psalms recited at the feast of Tabernacles, which celebrated the grape and olive harvest and was the occasion of royal anointings.⁵⁶ It is also the time when Christ will return to the Mount of Olives (whence he rose to heaven and where he wrought the Atonement in Gethsemane) to rule on earth (Zechariah 14:4, 16-19).⁵⁷ Was the cornerstone element, too, borrowed from Zenos? It is used by Paul two chapters before his discussion of the grafted branches (Romans 9:32–33).

The earliest reference to Israel rejecting "the Rock of his salvation" is found in Deuteronomy 32:15, following references to honey and oil from the rock, along with milk and "pure blood of the grape" (Deuteronomy 32:13–14). When the text returns to the subject of the Rock (Deuteronomy 32:30–33), the passage is tied to the vine of Sodom and the bitter grapes of Gomorrah, referred to earlier (see also Deuteronomy 32:37–38).

In Psalm 80:8–16, Israel is compared to a vine and a tree brought up out of Egypt and planted by the Lord in the land of Canaan, where the previous population had been removed.⁵⁸ The subsequent scattering of Israel is symbolized by its branches going over the waters. But the Psalmist asked that the Lord "visit this vine; and the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch that thou madest strong for thyself" (Psalm 80:13–14). In the end, the branches are plucked, devoured, cut down, and burned, as in Jacob 5.

The *Damascus Rule*, speaking of Israel, says that God "caused a plant root to spring up from Israel and Aaron to inherit His land and to prosper on the good things of His earth."⁵⁹

The most striking characteristic of the Lord of the vine-

yard in Zenos's parable is his patience with an unfruitful tree and his willingness to spend much of his time nourishing it. To Hosea, the Lord said, "I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree. . . . They shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine. . . . Ephraim shall say, . . . I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found" (Hosea 14:4–8).

In the pseudepigraphic account in *Pseudo-Philo*, the Lord tells Joshua, when he divided the land at Shiloh, "And your land will be renowned over all the earth, and your seed special among all the peoples, who will say, 'Behold a faithful people! Because they believed in the Lord, therefore the Lord freed them and planted them.' And so I will plant you like a desirable vine, . . . and I will command the rain and the dew, and they will be abundant for you during your lifetime."⁶⁰

The same work tells of a vision of the high priest Eleazar, which he recounted to his son Phinehas, in which the Lord said: "How much I have toiled among my people . . . And I would plant a great vineyard, and from it I would choose a plant; and I would care for it and call it by my name, and it would be mine forever. When I did all the things that I said, nevertheless my plant that was called by my name did not recognize me as its planter, but it destroyed its own fruit and did not yield up its fruit to me."⁶¹ Kenaz, hearing these words recounted years later by Phinehas, remarked, "Will the Shepherd destroy his flock for any reason except that it has sinned against him? And now he is the one who will spare us according to the abundance of his mercy, because he has toiled so much among us."⁶² The great care taken of the vineyard by the Lord,

along with the failure of the plants to yield fruit, are features shared with the Zenos account in Jacob 5.

In Jubilees 36:6, Isaac tells Jacob and Esau that God "will plant you on the earth as a righteous planting which will not be uprooted for all the eternal generations." If they prove unrighteous, they would "be uprooted from the land of the living" and burned "with devouring burning fire" (Jubilees 36:9–10).⁶³

In another pseudepigraphic work Enoch, knowing that the deluge would come, asked God to "not destroy all the flesh of the people," but to "sustain the flesh of righteousness and uprightness as a plant of eternal seed."⁶⁴ That plant was the family of Noah, whose descendant Abraham was selected as "a righteous planting for eternal generations, and a holy seed."⁶⁵ In the *Apocalypse of Adam*, we read that "the Illuminator of knowledge will pass by in great glory in order to leave a remnant of the seed of Noah and the sons of Ham and Japheth so that he might leave behind for himself fruit-bearing trees," by which we understand Israel.⁶⁶

A late tradition associated the planting of the Lord with the royal line of David, and placed these words in the mouth of Solomon:

For I was established and lived and was saved, and my foundations were laid on account of the Lord's hand; because he has planted me. For he set the root, and watered it and adapted it and blessed it, and its fruits will be forever. It penetrated deeply and sprang up and spread out, and it was full and was enlarged. And the Lord alone was praised, in his planting and in his cultivation; In his care and in the blessing of his lips, in the beautiful planting of his right hand; And in the attainment of his planting, and in the understanding of his mind. Hallelujah.⁶⁷

The writer of the *Odes of Solomon* compared himself to a

planting of the Lord, placing stress on the care the Lord gave, the deep roots, the spreading branches, and the eternal fruit. These features are all found in Jacob 5. Earlier in the ode, the writer spoke of the Lord helping him "to pass over chasms and gulfs, . . . cliffs and valleys," becoming "for me a haven of salvation, and set me on the place of immortal life. And he went with me and caused me to rest and did not allow me to err; because he was and is the Truth. And there was no danger for me because I constantly walked with him; and I did not err in anything because I obeyed him."⁶⁸ These elements remind us of Lehi's vision of the tree of life, of the rod and path which led thereto, and of the gulf into which the wicked, who did not cling to the word of God, fell.

Chapter 11 of the same work also has a number of parallels with the Zenos parable. The author spoke of his heart being "pruned and its flower appeared, then grace sprang up in it, and it produced fruits for the Lord."⁶⁹ The Lord established him "upon the rock of truth" and provided waters from a spring, "living water that does not die."⁷⁰ "Renewed . . . with his garment, and possessed . . . by his light," he "became like a land which blossoms and rejoices in its fruits."⁷¹ Continuing the tree analogy, he compared the Lord to "the sun upon the face of the land" and spoke of receiving dew.⁷² Taken to paradise, he saw

blooming and fruit-bearing trees, and self-grown was their crown. Their branches were flourishing and their fruits were shining; their roots (were) from an immortal land. And a river of gladness was irrigating them, and the region about them in the land of eternal life. Then I adored the Lord because of his magnificence. And I said, blessed, O Lord, are they who are planted in your land, and who have a place in your Paradise; And who grow in the growth of your trees, and have passed from dark-

ness into light. Behold, all your laborers are fair, they who work good works, and turn from wickedness to your kindness. For they turned away from themselves the bitterness of the trees, when they were planted in your land. And everyone was like your remnant. (Blessed are the workers of your water,) and the eternal memorial of your faithful servants.⁷³

This passage has a number of parallels to the Zenos parable. People, compared to trees, are planted by the Lord, who waters them, provides sunlight, and prunes them, whereupon they produce fruits. The ultimate planting is in the Paradise (“orchard”) of God. Those trees that do not respond produce bitter fruit. Also note the role played by the “laborers” and the “faithfulness of the servants.” There is a further tie to Lehi’s vision in that, like the brilliantly white fruit of the tree of life (1 Nephi 8:11), the fruits of the trees in the ode “were shining.”

The pseudepigraphic work known as the *Psalms of Solomon* contains a similar destruction of “the Lord’s paradise,” wherein “the trees of life are his devoted ones. Their planting is firmly rooted forever; they shall not be uprooted as long as the heavens shall last, For Israel is the portion and inheritance of God.”⁷⁴ The verses that follow contrast the fate of the disobedient, whose “inheritance is Hades, and darkness and destruction.” Again, we are reminded that, in Lehi’s vision (1 Nephi 8:32; 15:26–30), the disobedient are lost in the gulf, evidently akin to Hades in this passage.⁷⁵

The likening of humans to trees planted by the Lord is also found in *4 Ezra*, where we read that “not all that were planted will take root; so all those who have been sown in the world will not be saved.”⁷⁶ In the same work, we find the following passage:

So I considered my world, and behold, it was lost, and my earth, and behold it was in peril because of the devices of those who had come into it. And I saw and spared some with great difficulty, and saved for myself one grape out of a cluster,⁷⁷ and one plant out of a great forest. So let the multitude perish, which has been born in vain, but let my grape and my plant be saved, and my plant because with much labor I have perfected them.⁷⁸

The “great labor” invested in the plant that was spared reminds us of Zenos’s description of the diligent labor in the vineyard.⁷⁹ Despite this intense care, in most versions of the parable some of the trees or branches fail to produce fruit.

THE FATE OF UNFRUITFUL TREES

Jesus compared people to trees, calling their deeds “fruit” (Matthew 12:33). He declared that the trees that failed to produce good fruit would be cut down and cast into the fire.⁸⁰ On one occasion, to illustrate his point, he cursed an unfruitful fig tree and it withered (Matthew 21:18–20; Mark 11:12–14, 20–21). This act was probably intended to establish Christ’s divine nature, since the tree parables were, by then, well known, and people would have been aware that God is the master of the vineyard of Israel.

Alma, perhaps citing an earlier scripture, taught:

Yea, he saith: Come unto me and ye shall partake of the fruit of the tree of life; yea, ye shall eat and drink of the bread and the waters of life freely; Yea, come unto me and bring forth works of righteousness, and ye shall not be hewn down and cast into the fire— For behold, the time is at hand that whosoever bringeth forth not good fruit, or whosoever doeth not the works of righteousness, the same shall have cause to wail and mourn. (Alma 5:34–36.)⁸¹

One of the more well-known descriptions of the unfruitful tree is found in Luke 13:6–9:

A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.

The parable of the unfruitful fig tree shares several features with the Zenos parable: the fruit tree is planted in a vineyard; it fails to produce as expected; the owner works with a servant; he plans to nourish the tree and, if it does not bear fruit, cut it down. In the Luke 13 account, the master of the vineyard had “come seeking fruit” for three years, just as in the Zenos parable he paid three visits to the vineyard. Some of the wording is identical to that found in Jacob. “Why cumbereth it the ground?” is the question asked in both the Bible and the Book of Mormon stories (Luke 13:7; Jacob 5:9, 30, 44, 49, 66). To save the tree, the owner plans to “dig about it, and dung it” (Luke 13:8; Jacob 5:5, 47, 64).

THE LOFTINESS OF THE BRANCHES

In the Zenos parable, the servant attributes the unfruitfulness of the olive trees to “the loftiness of [the] vineyard” (Jacob 5:48). The “wild branches,” representing the Gentiles, had “overrun the roots” of the main tree (Jacob 5:37). This loftiness may symbolize pride—the problem that prompted Paul to write the parable of the grafted branches to the Roman saints (Romans 11:18) and of which Jacob spoke in Jacob 2:12–22.

In the the pseudepigraphic book of *4 Baruch*, trees are spoken of in terms similar to those found in Jacob 5:

And the tree of life which is planted in the middle of Paradise will cause all the uncultivated trees to bear fruit, and they will grow and sprout. And the trees that had (already) sprouted and boasted and said, "We raised our top to the air," he will cause them to wither together with the loftiness of their branches. And the firmly rooted tree will cause them to be judged!⁸²

Here, as in Jacob 5, the tree of life, when joined with "uncultivated" or wild trees, causes the latter to bear fruit. In both passages, their "loftiness" results in damage to the trees (cf. Jacob 5:48).

A similar theme is found in Daniel 4:10–26, in which the Babylonian king is compared to "a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven" (Daniel 4:10–11, 20). Though the tree produced much fruit (Daniel 4:12), an angel commanded, "Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit" (Daniel 4:14, 23). The stump and roots alone remained (Daniel 4:15, 23, 26).

THE FATE OF NATIONS

In the Bible, the fate of nations is often compared to trees and other plants that are destroyed by invading armies or natural catastrophes.⁸³ For example, in Isaiah 16:7–14, Moab is compared to a vine, whose "principal plants" (leaders?) have been "broken down" (Isaiah 16:8). The stretching out of the branches "over the sea" (Isaiah 16:8) is found in other prophecies about scattered nations. The Moabites who escape destruction are termed a "remnant," as in other biblical and Book of Mormon passages. In

this prophecy, it is the Lord who cares for the vine, watering it with his tears (Isaiah 16:9). Note the reference to the vine and the vineyard (Isaiah 16:9–10). Jeremiah also used the branch analogy in reference to Moab, saying, “O vine of Sibmah, . . . thy plants are gone over the sea, . . . the spoiler is fallen upon thy summer fruits and upon thy vintage” (Jeremiah 48:32–33).⁸⁴

Isaiah terms the Assyrians a “rod” in the hand of God (Isaiah 10:5, 15) that shall be burned as thorns and briars by a fire that “shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field. . . . And the rest of the trees of his forest shall be few” (Isaiah 10:16–19). Describing the Assyrian invasion of Judah, he prophesied that the Lord “shall lop the bough . . . and the high ones of stature shall be hewn down, and the haughty shall be humbled. And he shall cut down the thickets of the forest with iron” (Isaiah 10:33–34).⁸⁵

Ezekiel, perhaps following Isaiah’s example, warned the king of Egypt not to become like “the Assyrian [who] was a cedar in Lebanon with fair branches . . . and of an high stature; and his top was among the thick boughs,” rendered great by the “rivers running round about his plants” (Ezekiel 31:3–5, 7). “All the trees of Eden, that were in the garden of God, envied him” (Ezekiel 31:9), but his height and the thickness of his branches were his undoing (Ezekiel 31:10). Other nations “have cut him off, and . . . his branches are fallen, and his boughs are broken” (Ezekiel 31:12).

Similar imagery is used to describe the annihilation of the wicked at Christ’s second coming. Malachi wrote of this destruction of the last days:

For behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither

root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings. (Malachi 4:1–2.)

In this passage, the wicked are burned, leaving “neither root nor branch,” while the sun provides life and health to the righteous (as it does to trees).

This last great destruction is also described in harvest terms in Revelation 14:14–20, where we read that “the earth was reaped” (Revelation 14:16). John overheard one of the angels declaring, “Gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God” (Revelation 14:18–19). But when “the winepress was trodden . . . blood came out of the winepress,” indicating that the vine is a metaphor for human beings.

THE SCATTERING AND GATHERING OF ISRAEL

In one of the earliest passages comparing Israel to trees, the prophet Balaam said of Israel, “As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river’s side, as the trees of lign aloes which the Lord hath planted, and as cedar trees beside the waters. He shall pour the water out of his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters” (Numbers 24:6–7). Throughout the Old Testament, Israel is compared to a tree or vine whose scattered branches will be gathered back to their homeland and replanted. We shall examine some of the major passages here.

Early Prophets

A passage attributed to Moses but obviously written after the captivity of Israel declares that, because the

Israelites turned from God, "the Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day" (Deuteronomy 29:28).

The theme of "uprooting" Israel continues in other biblical works. The Lord reputedly told Solomon that if the people turned from him, "then will I pluck them up by their roots out of my land which I have given them" (2 Chronicles 7:20). The prophet Ahijah declared that "the Lord shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water, and he shall root up Israel out of this good land, which he gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the river" (1 Kings 14:15).

Isaiah

The prophet Isaiah compared Israel to a tree more often than any other Bible writer. The context was typically a prophetic discussion of the scattering and gathering of Israel. If, as critics have suggested, Jacob 5 was borrowed from the Bible, it is much more likely that it relied on Isaiah than on the Epistle to the Romans or on Luke 13. If, on the other hand, the Zenos parable is authentic, then it is likely that Isaiah borrowed from that parable or that they both borrowed from a common source.

In one of Isaiah's earliest statements, he described Judah as being made desolate by foreign invaders, its cities "burned with fire." Jerusalem would be "left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers," with but "a very small remnant" left (Isaiah 1:7-9). "In that day," he wrote, "shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel" (Isaiah 4:2). Though often applied by commentators to the Messiah, this passage

evidently refers to those Israelites not taken captive or who return from captivity.

Speaking of the future scattering of Israel, Isaiah wrote, "But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves; so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof" (Isaiah 6:13).

Describing the forthcoming Assyrian invasion of 701 B.C., the prophet wrote that the Lord would cause the burning of thorns, briars, and the forest (Isaiah 10:16–19). "The Lord of hosts shall lop the bough with terror: and the high ones of stature shall be hewn down, and the haughty shall be humbled. And he shall cut down the thickets of the forest with iron" (Isaiah 10:33–34). This prophecy is immediately followed by his description of the rod, the stem, the branch, and the root of Jesse (Isaiah 11:1–10), and of the regathering of Israel.

In a later writing, he advised the inhabitants to "sow . . . and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruits thereof," declaring that a remnant of Judah would escape and "again take root downward, and bear fruit upward" (Isaiah 37:30–32; cf. 2 Kings 19:29–31).

In a prophecy directed against Damascus, Isaiah spoke of the fate of both the Syrian and the Israelite capitals (Isaiah 17:1–11). He likened the "remnant" to "gleaning grapes" and olives left on the tree after the harvest "in the top of the uppermost bough . . . in the outmost fruitful branches."⁸⁶ Israel's cities, he declared, would "be as a forsaken bough, and an uppermost branch." Israel would "plant pleasant plants and . . . set it with strange slips." The Hebrew word rendered "set" means to "sow" (for example, seeds), while the word translated "slips" refers to pruned branches. It would appear that Isaiah, like Zenos, was

speaking of grafting of foreign branches into the “pleasant plants.”

In Isaiah 24:1–13, the prophet spoke of the scattering of the people and the destruction of the city (evidently Jerusalem). The inhabitants, he said, “are burned, and few men left. The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth.” He compares the situation to “the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done.”

Isaiah 27:2–11 begins with words similar to those found at the beginning of Isaiah 5, which was discussed above. In this passage, it is the Lord himself who cares for and waters the vineyard and burns the briars and thorns. The vineyard clearly represents Israel: “He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit” (Isaiah 27:6). Implied in this statement is that Israel has been scattered abroad, and some parts of the nation destroyed: “They shall be broken off: the women come, and set them on fire” (Isaiah 27:11). A later passage in Isaiah 60:21 calls the people of Israel “the branch of my planting, the work of my hands,” and indicates that they will return to their land.

Jeremiah

Jeremiah was Isaiah’s spiritual successor as the prophet of the exile. Isaiah had foreseen the captivity and subsequent gathering of both Israel and Judah, the Assyrian conquest of Israel took place in his day. A century later, Jeremiah repeated the Lord’s message that Judah would be taken captive and later regathered, and then was an eyewitness to that captivity.

The Lord told Jeremiah, “I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to

plant" (Jeremiah 1:10).⁸⁷ Similar wording is used in a later passage by the same prophet:

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast. And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build, and to plant, saith the Lord. (Jeremiah 31:27–28.)⁸⁸

The Lord explained to Jeremiah (2:1–17) that Israel was "the firstfruits of his increase." He declared, "I brought you into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination." The statement resembles Zenos's declaration that the vineyard had become "corrupted" (Jacob 5:47) and that the lord of the vineyard was concerned about the unfruitful trees that cumbered his vineyard (Jacob 5:49). The Jeremiah passage also speaks of the cities being burned and of the Lord being the "fountain of living waters" referred to above. In Jeremiah 2:21, the Lord declared to Israel, "I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?" The idea is identical to the one we noted earlier in Isaiah 5:1–7. In Jeremiah 6:8–9, the Lord threatened to make Jerusalem "desolate, a land not inhabited. . . . They shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine: turn back thine hand as a grapegatherer into the baskets."

Jeremiah spoke of Judah as "a green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit," planted by the Lord himself who, because of his people's sins, "hath kindled fire upon it, and the branches of it are broken." Other nations want to "destroy the tree with the fruit thereof" (Jeremiah 11:16–19). Through

Jeremiah, the Lord also threatened to punish Israel: "According to the fruit of your doings, . . . I will kindle a fire in the forest thereof, and it shall devour all things round about" (Jeremiah 21:14).

Ezekiel

The prophet Ezekiel was a contemporary of Jeremiah who had been taken captive to Babylon eleven years before the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem. The exile was uppermost in his mind and in his writings.

In Ezekiel 15:1–8, the Lord compared the inhabitants of Jerusalem to a useless "vine tree . . . a branch which is among the trees of the forest," which "is cast into the fire for fuel" and burned. "As the vine tree among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem . . . and fire shall devour them . . . and I will make the land desolate."

Ezekiel also used the branch in a parable recorded in Ezekiel 17:1–24, which is one of the closest Old Testament parallels to the parable in Jacob 5:

A great eagle . . . took the highest branch of the cedar: he cropped off the top of his young twigs, and carried it into a land of traffic. . . . He took also of the seed of the land, and planted it in a fruitful field; he placed it by great waters, and set it as a willow tree. And it grew, and became a spreading vine . . . whose branches turned toward him, and the roots thereof were under him: so it became a vine, and brought forth branches, and shot forth sprigs. . . . There was also another great eagle . . . and, behold, this vine did bend her roots toward him, and shot forth her branches toward him, that he might water it by the furrows of her plantation. It was planted in a good soil by great waters, that it might bring forth branches, and that it might bear fruit, that it might be a goodly vine. (Ezekiel 17:3–8.)

The branch carried away and planted in good land by the first eagle parallels the story of the lord of the vineyard in the Zenos parable, who planted at least one of the branches in a good plot of ground (Jacob 5:25, 43). If the first eagle is the Lord, the second is evidently a pagan god (perhaps Baal) to whose worship the people had turned. The consequence of this action is that he shall “pull up the roots thereof, and cut off the fruit thereof, that it wither” (Ezekiel 17:9–10).

Ezekiel continues the story by relating the parable to the exile of Jewish leaders by the king of Babylon, who “hath also taken the mighty of the land” (Ezekiel 17:13). The Jewish king, he informs us, had broken his covenant, in consequence of which

I will bring him to Babylon . . . and they that remain shall be scattered toward all winds. . . . I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar. . . . And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish. (Ezekiel 17:20–24.)

The “highest branch” and the “high mountain” of Israel reminds us of the “loftiness of the vineyard” in Jacob 5:48. Similar thoughts are expressed in this passage from Ezekiel 19:10–14:

Thy mother is like a vine in thy blood, planted by the waters: she was fruitful and full of branches by reason of many waters. And she had strong rods for the sceptres of them that bare rule, and her stature was exalted among the thick branches, and she appeared in her height with

the multitude of her branches. But she was plucked up in fury, she was cast down to the ground, and the east wind dried up her fruit: her strong rods were broken and withered; the fire consumed them. And now she is planted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty ground. And fire is gone out of a rod of her branches, which hath devoured her fruit, so that she hath no strong rod to be a sceptre to rule. This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation.

Though the branch is taken from the cedar tree, as in Ezekiel 17, after it is “planted . . . in a fruitful field . . . [as] a willow tree,” it is called “a spreading vine,” with roots and branches. The “good soil” in which it was planted is reminiscent of the “good spot of ground” in the Zenos parable (Jacob 5:25, 43), while the “dry and thirsty ground” parallels the “poor spot of ground” of Jacob 5:21–23. In both passages, the destruction of the tree/vine is contemplated. In the Ezekiel account, its fruit is dried up by the wind and fire consumes the branches. The transplanted branches evidently represent the king of Judah, along with the princes and “the mighty of the land,” taken captive to Babylon, “planted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty ground.” The remaining branches, like Israel, are “scattered toward all winds.” The use of such terms as “fruitful” and “full of branches” further tie the passage to Jacob 5.

Though the tree suffers much in Ezekiel’s prophecy, he later noted that, after Israel is gathered in the last days, the Lord would “raise up for them a plant of renown” (Ezekiel 34:29). The term “plants of renown” is used in Doctrine and Covenants 124:61 in reference to the leaders of the Church.

The Minor Prophets

Some of the minor biblical prophets also speak of trees, branches, and vines in terms resembling the Zenos parable. For example, Joel 1:5–12 speaks of invaders who have

destroyed the vine and the fig tree of the Lord's land, which may symbolize the people of Israel. There is specific mention of new wine (product of the vine) and of oil (product of the olive tree). Other fruit trees are also said to be withered. The land devoured by fire becomes "a desolate wilderness" (Joel 2:3), and the invading army is compared to a fire (Joel 2:5). But the invaders will be driven "into a land barren and desolate" (Joel 2:20), while Israel's pastures will return and there will be plenty of wheat, wine, and oil (Joel 2:23–24).

The prophet Hosea recorded, "I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your fathers as the firstripe in the fig tree at her first time" (Hosea 9:10). He also compared Ephraim, the leading tribe in the kingdom of Israel, to a plant whose "root is dried up, they shall bear no fruit. . . . My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him; and they shall be wanderers among the nations. Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself" (Hosea 9:16–10:1). He further spoke of "the goodness of his land," again reminding us of Jacob 5:25, 43.

Hosea also wrote that Israel would be taken captive to Assyria (Hosea 11:5). "And the sword shall abide on his cities, and shall consume his branches, and devour them, because of their own counsels" (Hosea 11:6). Again, the branches appear to represent people.

The prophet Nahum (2:1–6), described what appears to be the Assyrian invasion, in which Israel's "vine branches" have been marred and its "fir trees . . . terribly shaken." The reference seems to be the people of the land.

Pseudepigraphic Works

Extracanonial books have also employed the tree imagery found in the parable of Zenos. *Fourth Ezra*, speaking of the election and scattering of Israel, declares:

O sovereign Lord, from every forest of the earth, and from all its trees you have chosen one vine . . . and from all the flowers of the world you have chosen for yourself one lily.⁸⁹ . . . And now, O Lord, why have you given over the one to the many, and dishonored the root beyond the others, and scattered your only one among the many?⁹⁰

A similar question is asked in the Greek version of the *Apocalypse of Baruch*: “Lord, why have you set fire to your vineyard and laid it waste?”⁹¹ The idea of burning the vineyard is found in the Zenos parable (Jacob 5:77).

The *Zadokite Fragment* compares Israelites returning from Babylon to a “root which had been planted of old, allowing it once more to possess the land and to grow fat in the richness of its soil.” Like the lord of the vineyard in Zenos’s parable, the Lord “took care of them and brought [them] to blossom.”⁹² Similarly, *Jubilees* reports God’s intention to gather Israel “from the midst of all the nations” and to “transplant them as a righteous plant.”⁹³

The Ethiopic book of *1 Enoch* contains a number of passages resembling the parable of Zenos. In chapter 10, we read of the wicked being “bound together,” evidently like sheaves; “they will burn and die.”⁹⁴ But “the plant of righteousness and truth will appear forever and he will plant joy. And then the righteous ones will escape. . . . And in those days the whole earth will be worked in righteousness, all of her planted with trees, and will find blessing. And they shall plant pleasant trees upon her—vines.”⁹⁵

The passage goes on to speak of the wine and oil that will result from the vines and olives and speaks of the earth being cleansed “from all injustice” as the Lord removes from it the wicked.⁹⁶

In chapter 24–25, Enoch is shown a very fragrant and beautiful tree, which Michael then explains to him is the

tree of life, reserved for the righteous in the last days.⁹⁷ He is then shown the future Jerusalem, "a blessed place, shaded with branches which live and bloom from a tree that was cut."⁹⁸ These branches are very much like the branches in the Zenos parable. Continuing his spiritual journey, Enoch visits trees in different parts of the world,⁹⁹ much like the servant of the vineyard in Jacob 5 visits the branches he planted in various parts of the vineyard.

In *1 Enoch* 93:2, Enoch tells his children about the "plant of truth," who is evidently Abraham or his descendant Christ, both of whom are alluded to in subsequent verses:

Then after the completion of the third week a (certain) man shall be elected as the plant of righteous judgment, and after him one (other) shall emerge as the eternal plant of righteousness . . . the sixth week . . . at its completion, the house of the kingdom shall be burnt with fire; and therein the whole clan of the chosen root shall be dispersed . . . the seventh week. . . . At its completion, there shall be elected the elect ones of righteousness from the eternal plant of righteousness.¹⁰⁰

As in the Zenos parable, the plant (the "clan of the chosen root") is dispersed.

THE TREE OF LIFE

In the pseudepigraphic book of *4 Ezra*, after speaking of the scattering of Israel among the nations (*4 Ezra* 2:7), the Lord promised to "give them the kingdom of Jerusalem" and "the tree of life shall give them fragrant perfume."¹⁰¹ This ties the return from scattering to Lehi's vision as well as to the parable of Zenos.

The concept is paralleled in Revelation 2:7 (cf. Revelation 22:14), where we read that the righteous gathering in

Jerusalem in the last days will eat of the fruit of the tree of life. Later in the same book we read:

And he shewed me a pure river of water¹⁰² of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. (Revelation 22:1–2.)

The twelve kinds of fruit, one each month, are evidently symbolic of the twelve tribes of Israel.¹⁰³ John had just written of the heavenly Jerusalem come to earth (Revelation 21:10) that its wall had twelve gates (Revelation 21:21) named after the twelve tribes of Israel (Revelation 21:12), measured 12,000 furlongs in either direction (21:16), was 144 cubits (12 x 12) high (Revelation 21:17), and having foundations decorated with twelve kinds of precious stones (Revelation 21:19–20). The fact that the leaves of the tree of life are said to be “for the healing of the nations” (cf. Ezekiel 47:12) reminds us of God’s promise that the nations of the world would be blessed through Abraham’s seed (Genesis 12:3; 22:18). Paul understood this seed to be Christ (Galatians 3:16), through whom we, by adoption, can be “Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Galatians 3:29).

CONCLUSIONS

I have no doubt that this study has not exhausted all ancient texts bearing a resemblance to the Zenos parable found in Jacob 5. Nevertheless, the corpus dealt with here leads me to conclude that a large number of other documents have borrowed from Zenos. Some of these have used the Zenos material for ends other than those intended by its

original author. In some few cases, the material makes less sense in its new context; this lends additional support to the idea that it was borrowed from elsewhere.

Critics of the Book of Mormon will undoubtedly continue to maintain that Joseph Smith invented the Zenos parable by borrowing elements from the Bible. Three facts make me think otherwise. The most obvious is the vast array of biblical texts from which he would have had to derive these elements. After more than forty years of studying the Bible, I needed the help of a computer to find some of the passages. I doubt that Joseph Smith could have had very many of these passages at his command.

The second point is the fact that different Bible passages have combinations of elements found in Jacob 5. The variety of these combinations is so complex that I suspect that no two of the texts share all elements with any of the others except with the Zenos parable.

Finally, we have the fact that a number of pseudepigraphic works (only a few of them discussed herein), like the various biblical passages, contain elements found in Zenos's olive tree parable, with the same variety of combinations seen in the Bible. Indeed, some of them have elements of Jacob 5 that are not found in any of the Bible passages. Since Joseph Smith did not have access to these pseudepigraphic books, we conclude that the authors of those works had direct or indirect access to the Zenos parable.¹⁰⁴

Notes

1. See one of the more recent critiques in Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake: Utah Lighthouse Ministry, 1990), and my review of that work in *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon*, 3 (1991): 188–230.

2. Here are the known Old Testament quotes in Romans 11. Those marked with * are attributed by Paul to an unnamed source ("the

scriptures," "that which is written," etc.). Those marked with ** are correctly attributed by Paul to the author or source:

verses 3–4* = 1 Kings 19:14 (10), 18

verse 8* = Isaiah 29:10 and 6:8

verses 9–10** = Psalm 69:22–23

verse 25 is an allusion to Proverbs 26:12 (cf. Proverbs 3:7)

verses 26–27* = Isaiah 59:20–21

verse 33 = Isaiah 40:28 (cf. Psalm 145:3)

verse 34 = Isaiah 40:13

Some of verse 16, though not a quote, may be related to Numbers 15:18–21 or Leviticus 19:23–24. It begins the analogy of the grafting of the branches (verses 16–24). If we count these as borrowing from Zenos's parable, then 53% of the verses in Romans 11 derives from earlier sources. This compares favorably with the statistics for chapters 9 and 10 (45% and 57%, respectively). Here is the correspondence list from those chapters:

9:7 = Genesis 21:2

9:9* = Genesis 18:10 (14)

9:12* = Genesis 25:23

9:13* = Malachi 1:2–3

9:14 is an allusion to Psalm 92:15

9:25** = Exodus 33:19

9:17* = Exodus 9:16

9:18 = Exodus 33:19

9:20–21 evidently draws from Job 9:12, Isaiah 45:9 (cf. 29:16) or Jeremiah 18:6

9:25–26** = Hosea 2:23 (quoted also in Zechariah 13:4)

9:27–28** = Isaiah 10:22–23

9:29** = Isaiah 1:9

9:32 is an allusion to Malachi 2:8

9:33* = Isaiah 28:16 (cf. Psalm 118:22–23; Isaiah 8:14–15; Matthew 21:42–44; Acts 4:10–11)

10:5** = Leviticus 18:5 (cf. Numbers 4:19; Deuteronomy 4:1)

10:6–8* = Deuteronomy 30:12–14

10:11 = Isaiah 28:16b

10:13 = Joel 2:32 (Joel 2:28–32 is cited in Acts 2:17–21)

10:15* = Isaiah 52:7 (also Nahum 1:15)

10:16** = Isaiah 53:1

10:18 = Psalm 19:4

10:19** = Deuteronomy 32:21

10:20–21** = Isaiah 65:1–2

It is clear that Paul drew very heavily on previous writers in these

chapters, although it is unknown how many of these passages would have been recognized by Paul's audience in Rome. Indeed, Romans 11:33–36 is so self-contained that I suspect that it is an extract from a now-lost text.

3. This fact will undoubtedly be cited by critics as further evidence that Joseph Smith borrowed from Romans 11. But the weight of the evidence is against this idea.

4. Blindness is a feature of Lehi's vision of the tree of life, discussed below.

5. They are also discussed in the articles by David Seely and John Welch in this volume.

6. The alternative to this view is that Joseph Smith borrowed bits and pieces from a very large corpus of biblical and pseudepigraphic texts (some of the latter unknown in his day) to create a remarkably coherent text. To me, this seems as miraculous as translating from plates using a stone!

7. In this respect, we note that other Book of Mormon passages indicate that the Jews will begin to believe in Christ at the time they are gathered (2 Nephi 6:11; 9:2; 10:7; 25:16–17; 30:4–7). This shows that the tree represented both Christ and the land or people of Israel.

8. Nibley noted that, in the third-century Christian document, the *Pistis Sophia*, Jesus and Melchizedek are said to "have issued forth from the pure and perfect (unmixed) light of the First Tree" and that Jesus "comes forth first from the pure light of the First Tree." Hugh W. Nibley, *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1975), 276.

9. This is reflected in the Book of Mormon idea that the Israelites will gather to their lands when they begin to accept Christ (2 Nephi 30:3–7; 3 Nephi 5:20–26).

10. In Galatians 3:16, 29, Paul considered Jesus to be the true seed through whom the nations would be blessed by adoption into Israel, hence the concept of the grafted branches in his epistle to the Romans 11:16–24.

11. See my article "Olive Oil: Symbol of the Holy Ghost" in this volume.

12. Hugh W. Nibley, *Since Cumorah*, vol. 7 in *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1988), 189–91.

13. Christ used the same imagery when speaking of the mustard seed in Matthew 13:31–32 (Mark 4:30–32; Luke 13:18–19; cf. Matthew 17:20). It is interesting that in Matthew and Mark, this appears just after the parables of the sower and the wheat and tares (Matthew

13:18–30; Mark 4:14–20, 26–29), while in Luke, it appears in the same chapter as the story of the fig tree in the vineyard (Luke 13:6–9), which so resembles parts of Zenos's parable.

14. Jacob 5:3–5, 11–12, 20, 22–25, 27–28, 31, 34, 58, 62, 71, 75–76; cf. Jacob's comments in Jacob 6:2, 7.

15. In other verses, the branches are cast into the fire (Jacob 5:7, 26, 37, 42, 45–47, 49).

16. Alma had begun his discussion with the words "If ye can no more than desire to believe" (Alma 32:27). His discussion of fruit may have prompted his companion, Amulek, to tell the same audience to "bring fruit unto repentance" (Alma 34:30).

17. This was revealed to Nephi immediately after he had asked about the meaning of the tree and had been shown the birth of Christ in response (1 Nephi 11:10–20).

18. This is the chapter in which the tree of life plays such a prominent role, as discussed elsewhere in this article. See Revelation 22:1–2, 11–12, 14, 17, 19–21. In Revelation 5:5, "the Lion of the tribe of Juda" is identified as "the Root of David."

19. It is significant that while the fall took place in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3), the redemption came in the Garden of Gethsemane, where Christ conquered spiritual death (John 18:1), and in the garden with the tomb, where Christ conquered temporal death (John 18:41). Similarly, an early pseudepigraphic work noted that while the effects of the tree of knowledge brought about the fall, the cross of Christ (traditionally made of olive wood) overcame those effects (Nicodemus 18:9–10). See also the essay by Truman G. Madsen in this volume.

20. This covenant of obedience is part of the sacramental prayer found in Moroni 4:3 and D&C 20:77.

21. For an in-depth study, see chapter 3, "The Vineyard, the Grape, and the Tree of Life," in Robert Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom: A Study in Early Syriac Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975). The Syriac material discussed here was drawn from Murray's book. For other Syriac sources, see Stephen D. Ricks, "Olive Culture in the Second Temple Era and Early Rabbinic Period," in this volume.

22. Aphrahat, *Demonstrations* VI, 244:13–20, in Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 109.

23. Aphrahat, *Demonstrations* XIV, 680:13–16, 22–24, in *ibid.*, 105–106.

24. Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 108.

25. Ephrem, *On Virginity*, in *ibid.*, 112.

26. Ephrem, *On the Nativity* 8, 8–9, in *ibid.*, 102.

27. Ephrem, *On the Nativity* 18, 21–22, in *ibid.*, 102–3.

28. In *ibid.*, 129. Cf. *4 Baruch* 9:16–17, where the trees in the Garden of Eden are said to be people, some of whom are made fruitful by their proximity to the tree of life. Augustine took the account of the Garden of Eden to be allegorical, with the garden representing the Church, the fruit-bearing trees the saints (and the fruit their works), the tree of life Christ, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil being free choice (Augustine, *The City of God* XIII, 21).

29. Cf. Deuteronomy 29:18; 32:32–33; Judges 5:14; Job 14:1–12; Song of Solomon 2:3; Isaiah 9:14–19; 14:8, 19, 29–30; 19:15; 25:5; Daniel 11:7. Cf. also Matthew 13:21, 26–30 (Mark 4:17–20). In the pseudepigraphic *Similitude of Hermas*, people are compared to an elm and a vine (chapter 2) and to trees, of which the barren were burned (chapters 3–4). Also see Hermas's vision of the rods in chapter 8.

30. *Pseudo-Philo* 25:3, in James H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 vols. (Garden City: Doubleday, 1983), 2:335.

31. *Pseudo-Philo* 25:5 (citing Deuteronomy 29:18), in *ibid.*, 335. The King James Version, referring to Israelites who apostatize, speaks of "a root that beareth gall and wormwood." Hebrews 12:15 alludes to the same passage in terming apostates the "root of bitterness."

32. *Pseudo-Philo* 26:1–5, in *ibid.*, 2:335. Cf. Ignatius's *Epistle to the Trallians* 11, where he warned of the "evil offshoots [of Satan] which produce death-bearing fruit," not being "the planting of the Father," whose fruits "would be incorruptible" because they sprang from the cross of Christ. See A. Cleveland Coxe, *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, vol. 1 in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Buffalo: Christian Literature, 1885), 71. In his *Epistle to the Philadelphians* 3, in *ibid.*, 80, Ignatius wrote, "Keep yourselves from those evil plants which Jesus Christ does not tend, because they are not the plantings of the Father." The Zenos parable hints that someone—possibly Satan—may have corrupted the trees of the vineyard (Jacob 5:47). Cf. the "enemy" who sowed tares in the wheat field (Matthew 13:25).

33. James H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2:364.

34. Joseph Smith blessed his father "as an olive tree, whose branches are bowed down with much fruit" (HC 1:466). He used almost identical wording in blessing his second counselor, Frederick G. Williams (HC 1:444). Of his first counselor, Sidney Rigdon, he wrote, "he shall bring forth much fruit, even as the vine of the choice grape" (HC 1:443).

35. In the same Psalm, the righteous man is contrasted with the

ungodly, who "shall perish" (Psalm 1:4–6). Note the use of the expression "rivers of water" (Psalm 1:1), found also in Lehi's vision of the tree of life (1 Nephi 8:13; 15:26). In the pseudepigraphic *Epistle of Barnabas* 11, the Psalms passage is said to presage baptism: "Further, what says He? 'And there was a river flowing on the right, and from it arose beautiful trees; and whosoever shall eat of them shall live for ever,' " after leaving his sins in the river by baptism (in Coxe, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 144). This, too, compares favorably with Lehi's vision, especially in the fact that the river was filthy (1 Nephi 15:26), perhaps because of the sins washed away in it.

36. In Jeremiah 17:13 (as in Jeremiah 2:13, where the context is similar), the Lord calls himself "the fountain of living waters" (cf. John 4:10), meaning that he nourishes the tree, as in the Zenos parable. Note that Nephi, explaining his father's vision of the tree of life, termed the river seen by his father "the fountain of living waters" (1 Nephi 11:25).

37. *Ahiqar* 8:26, 30 (Arabic version), in R. H. Charles, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1983), 774–75.

38. Even in Mesopotamian art the tree of life is often depicted with seven branches. It appears thus on Jewish lamps of the Herodian (Roman) period.

39. Because the angel also mentioned Zerubbabel (Zechariah 4:6–10), one has the impression that he was one of these. Zerubbabel, of course, was of the royal line, and hence properly called an "anointed one," though the Hebrew term employed in this passage is not the usual "Messiah." The other person represented by the olive tree was likely the high priest, Joshua, who is termed "the branch" (Zechariah 3:8; 6:11–13). Like the king, the high priest was anointed in ancient Israel.

40. According to the TB *Taanit* B I, 103, the olive tree was Othniel, the fig tree Deborah, the vine Gideon, and the bramble Elimelech.

41. Cf. the parallel to this story in *Pseudo-Philo* 37, in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2:350, where the olive tree is missing but the fire remains.

42. It would be difficult to make a case for Jotham borrowing the idea of the olive tree and the vine from Zenos's olive tree in the vineyard, since the trees also offered the throne to the fig tree.

43. That Gideon, Jotham's father, was of Manasseh is clear from Judges 8:15. The Nephites, who were descendants of Manasseh (Alma 10:3; cf. 1 Nephi 5:14), were of the seed of Zenos (3 Nephi 10:16; cf. Helaman 15:11). As Israelites, the Nephites would have

traced their ancestry through the patrilineage; thus, we presume that Zenos was of the tribe of Manasseh.

44. Nibley, *Since Cumorah*, 283–85. All quotes from the Qumran document known as the *Book of Hymns* used in this article are taken from Theodor H. Gaster, *The Dead Sea Scriptures*, 3d ed. (Garden City: Anchor, 1976).

45. *Thanksgiving Hymn* 10:6, 15–18, in *ibid.*, 168–69.

46. *Thanksgiving Hymn* 10:7, 18, in *ibid.*, 173.

47. *Thanksgiving Hymn* 14:8, 4–27, in *ibid.*, 175–78.

48. *Thanksgiving Hymn* 16:10, 32–34, in *ibid.*, 185.

49. Nibley, *Since Cumorah*, 280–83.

50. In several other passages, Israel is compared to a rod (Psalm 74:2; Jeremiah 10:16; 51:19). In Isaiah 27:6, we read that Israel is to blossom and bud. There is an obvious reference to Aaron's budding rod here (Numbers 17:1–10).

51. Cf. 3 Baruch 1:2. In the Talmud (TB *Sukkah* 49a), the "choicest vine" of Isaiah 5:2 is the temple, while the tower is its altar. (*Targum Jonathan* expands the text of Isaiah 5:2–5 to make the vineyard Israel, with the Lord's sanctuary and altar for the atonement of sins.) Similarly, in the parable in D&C 101:43–53, Zion (Jackson County, Missouri) is the vineyard, while the unbuilt tower was the temple the Saints had been commanded to construct. (Note mention of the harvest in D&C 101:64–66.) D&C 101 is a follow-on to D&C 97, where we read of the temple (vss. 10–12), the tower (vs. 20), the fruitful tree planted by the Lord in a goodly land by a pure stream and bearing precious fruit (vs. 9), and the destruction of the evil tree by fire (vss. 7, 26).

52. The parable in D&C 101:43–66 (see also 101:100–101) is, in turn, based on Isaiah 5:1–7 and Matthew 21:33–45. Song of Solomon 8:11–13 also appears to be based on the Isaiah passage.

53. This was the understanding of the early Syriac Fathers as well. Ephrem, in explaining the parable of the wicked husbandmen (Matthew 21), refers to Psalm 80 and Isaiah. In the latter, he understood the hedge to be the law, the winepress the altar, and the tower the temple, which is close to the Jewish interpretation and the use of the same imagery in D&C 101. Aphrahat tied together such diverse passages as Deuteronomy 32:32; Isaiah 5:3; Jeremiah 2:21; and Ezekiel 15:4–5 (Aphrahat, *Demonstrations* V, 225, 13–232, 2).

54. According to Acts 4:8–12, Jesus is this cornerstone. Cf. Ephesians 2:20.

55. Isaiah may have had the same passage in mind when he wrote Isaiah 28:16. There is another reference to the stumbling stone in

Isaiah 8:14–15 (cited in 2 Nephi 18:14–15). Jeremiah, like Jesus, tied building and planting together in his discussion of Israel (Jeremiah 1:10).

56. See my article, “King Benjamin and the Feast of Tabernacles,” in John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks, eds., *By Study and Also by Faith*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1990), 2:197-237.

57. Other parts of Zechariah 14 also resemble parts of Psalm 118.

58. Cf. *Jubilees* 1:16–17, where the Lord promises to transplant Israel “as a righteous plant” with “my sanctuary in their midst” (in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2:53). The theme is also found in Amos 2:9–10: “Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of the cedars, and he was strong as the oaks; yet I destroyed his fruit from above, and his roots from beneath. And I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and led you forty years through the wilderness, to possess the land of the Amorite.” These passages are reminiscent of Jacob 5:44, where the lord of the vineyard speaks of having cut down a previous tree (the Jaredites) “that I might plant this tree [Lehi’s descendants] in the stead thereof.” There is at least a symbolic parallel between Israel being brought into a promised land to inherit the possession of another people and the Nephite colonization in the New World.

59. CD 1.5.7, in Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 3d ed. (London: Penguin, 1990), 83.

60. *Pseudo-Philo* 23:12, in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2:333.

61. *Pseudo-Philo* 28:4, in *ibid.*, 2:341.

62. *Pseudo-Philo* 28:5, in *ibid.* The shift from comparing the Lord to a husbandman to a shepherd is interesting and finds parallels in the Bible and the Book of Mormon. Psalm 80, while calling the Lord the “Shepherd of Israel” (Psalm 80:1), speaks of Israel as a vine brought from Egypt and planted in the promised land (Psalm 80:8). In Psalm 23, where “the Lord is my Shepherd” (Psalm 23:1), anointing oil from the olive tree is introduced (Psalm 23:5). The messianic prophecy of Isaiah 53 compares the Messiah to both a tender plant (Isaiah 53:2) and to a lamb led to the slaughter, while comparing Israel to sheep who have gone astray (Isaiah 53:6–7). Jeremiah also compared Israel to sheep and their leaders to pastors or shepherds, then spoke of the messianic “Branch” (Jeremiah 23:1–5). In another place, he wrote of the wicked being planted, taking root, and producing fruit, then called upon the Lord to slaughter them like sheep (Jeremiah 12:1–3). The Lord responded by saying, “My pastors have destroyed my

vineyard" (Jeremiah 12:10). In the midst of a prophecy about the shepherds of Israel (Ezekiel 34), the prophet Ezekiel noted that gathered Israel was to become a "plant of renown" (Ezekiel 34:29). Isaiah compared the Lord to a shepherd and his people to sheep (Isaiah 40:11) just two verses before one of the passages cited by Paul in Romans 11:34-36, i.e., Isaiah 40:13, 18. In 1 Nephi 15:12-15, the olive branch/vine imagery is commingled with the "true fold of God." In Alma 26:4-7, the fold of God is tied to the harvest in a passage about missionary work. Alma also combined thoughts of the tree of life, corrupt trees, and the shepherd in Alma 5:34-62.

63. See Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2:124.

64. *1 Enoch* 84:5-6, in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:62.

65. *Jubilees* 16:26; in *ibid.*, 2:89. *Jubilees* 16:31 implies that this promise from God is what prompted Abraham to initiate the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles by taking "branches of palm trees and fruit of good trees" and going "around the altar with branches." Abraham told Isaac that God "will raise up from you a righteous plant in all the earth" (*Jubilees* 21:24, in *ibid.*, 2:97).

66. *Apocalypse of Adam* 6:1, in *ibid.*, 1:715.

67. *Odes of Solomon* 38:17-22, in *ibid.*, 2:767-68.

68. *Odes of Solomon* 38:2-5, in *ibid.*, 2:766.

69. *Odes of Solomon* 11:1, in *ibid.*, 2:744.

70. *Odes of Solomon* 11:5-7, in *ibid.* The "rock of truth" is evidently the same rock mentioned by Paul in Romans 11, as discussed above.

71. *Odes of Solomon* 11:11-12, in *ibid.*, 2:745.

72. *Odes of Solomon* 11:13-14, in *ibid.*

73. *Odes of Solomon* 11:16-22, in *ibid.*, 2:745-46.

74. *Psalms of Solomon* 14:1-5, in *ibid.*, 2:663.

75. Cf. *2 Enoch* 8:1-7, where Enoch, like Lehi, saw in vision the tree of life, the river, and the valley.

76. *4 Ezra* 8:41, in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:543.

77. Compare the wording of *4 Ezra* 12:42, 44: "For of all the prophets you alone are left to us, like a cluster of grapes from the vintage. . . . Therefore if you forsake us, how much better it would have been for us if we also had been consumed in the burning of Zion" (in *ibid.*, 1:551).

78. *4 Ezra* 9:20-22, in *ibid.*, 1:544. Charlesworth notes that the word rendered "forest" here is based on the Syriac, Ethiopic, and Arabic readings, while the Latin reads "tribe." The King James translators, in the apocryphal *2 Esdras*, rendered it "people."

79. The word "labor" is used in Jacob 5:29, 61–62, 74; cf. 5:47. The lord of the vineyard instructed his assistant, "Call servants, that we may labor diligently with our might in the vineyard" (Jacob 5:61). The text subsequently notes, "And thus they labored with all diligence" (Jacob 5:74–75). From D&C 39:13, 17, 22—a passage that relies on Jacob 5—the laborers in the vineyard are missionaries, charged with gathering the Lord's people.

80. Matthew 3:10 (Luke 3:9; Alma 5:52; D&C 97:7, 9); 7:16–20 (Luke 6:43–44; 3 Nephi 14:16–20); 12:33.

81. See also Alma 5:37–39, 41, 52, 56–57, 59–60, 62. Alma 5:34 clearly harks back to Lehi's vision of the tree of life as a symbol of Christ, who declared himself to be not only the source of "living water" (John 4:10), but also the "bread of life" (John 6:35). In Alma 32:27–33:1, Alma compares faith to a seed that becomes a tree bearing fruit inside us. His description of that tree in Alma 32:42 is identical to Lehi's description of the tree of life in 1 Nephi 8:10–11.

82. *4 Baruch* 7:16–17, in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2:424. Similarly, in the Book of the Rolls f-103a, it is the wind from paradise which, touching the trees, ripens their fruits. *Menra* 21 of the *Liber Graduum*, compares Christ to "the Tree of Life, giving life to all things by his fruits" (in Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 129).

83. In some instances, it is not possible to determine if the passage refers to people, e.g., 1 Samuel 18:4–7.

84. The prophet also notes that there is no wine in the winepress. Note the broken staff or rod in Jeremiah 48:17.

85. There follows immediately after this (Isaiah 11:1–10) the prophecy of the rod, the stem, the branch, and the root of Jesse, which was discussed earlier.

86. The Isaiah passage was evidently the inspiration for *4 Ezra* 16:28–31, where it is said of the people of Babylon, Asia, Egypt, and Syria, "For out of a city, ten shall be left; and out of the field two, who have hidden themselves in thick groves and clefts in the rocks. As in an olive orchard three or four olives may be left on every tree, or as when a vineyard is gathered some clusters may be left by those who search carefully through the vineyard; so in those days three or four shall be left by those who search their houses with the sword" (*4 Esdras* 16:28–31, in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:558).

87. The prophet was then shown "a rod of an almond tree" (Jeremiah 1:11), perhaps symbolic of Aaron's almond tree rod that blossomed (Numbers 17:8). Significantly, Jeremiah was of the priestly lineage, a descendant of Aaron (Jeremiah 1:1).

88. Note the reference to the sour grapes in Jeremiah 31:29–30 and cf. this passage with Ezekiel 36:8–11.

89. Israel is also termed a lily in Hosea 14:5 and in *Thanksgiving Hymn 16* from Qumran, discussed above; see Gaster, *Dead Sea Scriptures*, 185. Testament of Simeon 6:2 has the patriarch declaring “my bones will flourish as a rose in Israel and my flesh as a lily . . . Jacob. . . . Holy ones shall be multiplied from me forever and ever and their branches shall extend to a great distance” (Charlesworth *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:787).

90. 4 *Ezra* 5:23–24, 28, in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:533.

91. *Apocalypse of Baruch* (Greek) 1:2, in *ibid.*, 1:663.

92. *Zadokite Fragment* 1:5, in Gaster, *Dead Sea Scriptures*, 66.

93. *Jubilees* 1:15–16, in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* 2:53.

94. 1 *Enoch* 10:14, in *ibid.*, 1:18.

95. 1 *Enoch* 10:16–17, in *ibid.*

96. 1 *Enoch* [Ethiopic] 10:14, 16–20, in *ibid.*

97. 1 *Enoch* 24:4–25:6 in *ibid.*, 1:26.

98. 1 *Enoch* 26:1, in *ibid.*, 1:26.

99. 1 *Enoch* 28–32, in *ibid.*, 1:27–28.

100. 1 *Enoch* 93:5, 8, 10, in *ibid.*, 1:74.

101. 4 *Ezra* 2:7, 10–12, in *ibid.*, 1:526–27. The translation in *K Apocrypha*, 2 *Esdras* 2:11, reads, “They shall have the tree of life for an ointment of sweet savor,” implying that it is the olive tree.

102. Lehi also saw a “river of water” in his dream of the tree of life (1 *Nephi* 8:13; 15:26).

103. Cf. the parable of the twelve olive trees in D&C 101:44–45.

104. It remains now for some industrious scholar(s) to examine the passages—biblical and non-biblical—that contain elements related to the account in *Jacob* 5 and to determine, if possible, the transmission sequence of these elements through time.

18

Olive Oil: Symbol of the Holy Ghost

John A. Tvedtnes

In both scripture and early Christian tradition, olive oil is symbolic of the Holy Ghost. This is because the Holy Ghost provides spiritual nourishment, enlightenment, and comfort, just as olive oil in the ancient Near East was used for food, light, and anointing. Olive oil remains a dietary staple in the Middle East and other Mediterranean countries, where it is used both for frying and for flavoring foods. The Bible mentions olive oil as food (Numbers 11:8; 1 Kings 17:12, 14, 16; 1 Chronicles 12:40; Ezra 3:7; Ezekiel 16:13, 19). Some food offerings consumed by the priests required the addition of olive oil.¹ Olive oil is often listed with other vegetable foods, wheat, barley, and wine.²

Oil lamps are among the most frequently found items in archaeological excavations. The earliest were made from a round, flat piece of clay pinched up to form a bowl with one or more spouts. By the time of Christ, the bowl became nearly completely enclosed, with a hole on the top for adding oil and an extended spout. This was the kind of oil lamp used by the ten virgins in Christ's parable (Matthew 25:1–13). The top of the lamp, between the hole for the oil and the spout, was often decorated with a seven-branched representation of the tree of life. In the tabernacle of Moses and later in the temple at Jerusalem, the tree of life was

symbolized by a seven-branched lampstand,³ the menorah of Judaism, described in Exodus 24:2 and 25.⁴

Olive oil has long been used to anoint one's skin. This was particularly important for a pastoral and agricultural people who spent much of their time out of doors in a hot, dry climate. This practice is mentioned in a number of Bible passages.⁵ Some Arabs still use olive oil to clean the skin, and it is an ingredient in some soaps. Newborn babes are still washed, then anointed with olive oil.

The only time the ancient Israelites avoided anointing themselves with oil was when fasting or in mourning (2 Samuel 14:2). Daniel noted that he spent three weeks without pleasant bread, flesh, and wine, during which time he did not anoint himself (Daniel 10:3). The Lord promised through Isaiah to provide the "oil of joy for mourning" (Isaiah 61:3). Building on this theme, Christ admonished his disciples to wash their faces and anoint their heads when fasting (Matthew 6:17; 3 Nephi 13:17). Anciently, anointing the body was accompanied by a change of clothes as part of the natural process of cleansing oneself (see Ruth 3:3).⁶

Olive oil was also used anciently to dress wounds. It prevented drying of the skin and infection. The good Samaritan poured wine and oil into the wounds of the man he rescued in the desert (Luke 10:34). Isaiah also referred to this practice: "From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment" (Isaiah 1:6). The use of oil in the treating of wounds undoubtedly played a role in its choice for ceremonial anointing of the sick by the early Christians (Mark 6:13; James 5:14–15).

OIL FROM THE TREE OF LIFE

Because it provided nourishment, light, and physical comfort, it is little wonder that olive oil came to be a symbol of life and of the spirit which gives life. But there are other reasons why olive oil came to have symbolic meaning. The olive tree lives for centuries rather than decades and, as a consequence, is a fit symbol for eternal life.⁷ Moreover, its oil keeps for a long period of time.

The pseudepigraphic *Apocalypse of Sedrach* 8:2 says that the Lord preferred the olive among the trees and the vine among fruit-bearing plants.⁸ According to *3 Baruch* 4:6–13, Michael planted the olive tree, while Satan planted the vine in the garden of Eden and other angels planted other trees.⁹ The vine, by this account, was the tree of knowledge of good and evil.¹⁰ But, in response to Noah's prayer, God changed it to good, noting that "its fruit will become the blood of God."

In some early traditions, the olive tree is identified with the tree of life of Genesis 2:9 and 3:22.¹¹ Adam, on his deathbed, is said to have asked Eve and Seth to entreat God to send his angel into Paradise to give them a little of "the oil of life" from "the tree of his mercy" with which to anoint himself in preparation for death.¹² Though they followed his instructions, the Lord told them that they could not take the oil "except in the last days."¹³

The *Gospel of Philip* hints that there is a tie between the tree of life and the olive tree: "But the tree of life is in the middle of the garden. However, it is from the olive tree that we get the chrism, and from the chrism, the resurrection."¹⁴ This implies that the tree of life or olive tree represents Christ, from whom the resurrection stems.¹⁵

Joseph Smith identified the tree of life with the olive tree when he designated D&C 88 (see preface) as an "olive leaf

. . . plucked from the Tree of Paradise, the Lord's message of peace to us." In Jewish lore, the tree of life is sometimes considered to be an olive tree, around which is entwined the vine, often believed to be the tree of knowledge.¹⁶

CEREMONIAL ANOINTING

In ancient Israel, olive oil compounded with specific spices was used for ceremonial anointing. It was forbidden to use this special "oil of holy ointment" for mundane anointings (Exodus 30:22–33; 31:11; 37:29; 39:38; 40:9–15). Moses used the oil to anoint the tabernacle and its accoutrements (Exodus 30:26–29; 40:9–11; Leviticus 8:10–11),¹⁷ just as his ancestor Jacob had anointed the covenant altar (KJV "pillar") he constructed at Beth-el (Genesis 28:18; 35:14).

Ancient Israel's leaders—kings, prophets, and priests—were anointed with olive oil as part of their initiation into a new role. The early Syriac Father Aphrahat wrote that, with the coming of Christ, "darkness departed from the mind of many . . . and the fruiting of the Light-giving Olive, in which is the Signing of the Mystery of Life, whereby Christians, priests, kings and prophets are made perfect . . . illuminates the darkness, anoints the sick and converts penitents by its hidden mystery."¹⁸ Murray noted that "the signing of the Mystery of Life" is a Syriac idiom referring to pre-baptismal anointing.¹⁹ The text continues by noting that those who return to God are illuminated and become leaven to the world, good wheat in a field of tares.²⁰

The earliest ceremonial anointing recorded in the Bible is that of Aaron and his sons, who were anointed as part of their consecration to the priesthood. The procedure is described in Exodus 29:

And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt

wash them with water. And thou shalt take the garments, and put upon Aaron the coat, and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breastplate, and gird him with the curious girdle of the ephod: And thou shalt put the mitre upon his head, and put the holy crown upon the mitre. Then shalt thou take the anointing oil, and pour it upon his head, and anoint him. And thou shalt bring his sons, and put coats upon them. And thou shalt gird them with girdles, Aaron and his sons, and put the bonnets on them: and the priest's office shall be theirs for a perpetual statute. (Exodus 29:4–9; see also Exodus 28:41; 30:30; 40:12–15; Leviticus 8:12–13, 30; 21:10–12; Psalm 133:1–2.)

The initiation of the priests was comprised of washing, anointing, and clothing in special garments. Two of these—washing and clothing—were repeated each time the high priest entered “the holy place” (Leviticus 16:3–4).²¹ The pseudepigraphic *Testament of Levi* describes the initiation of Aaron's ancestor in terms very reminiscent of those described above:

And I saw seven men in white clothing, who were saying to me, “Arise, put on the vestments of the priesthood, the crown of righteousness, the oracle of understanding, the robe of truth, the breastplate of faith, the miter for the head, and the apron for prophetic power.” Each carried one of these and put them on me and said, “From now on be a priest, you and all your posterity.” The first anointed me with holy oil and gave me a staff. The second washed me with pure water, fed me by hand with bread and holy wine, and put on me a holy and glorious vestment. The third put on me something made of linen, like an ephod. The fourth placed . . . around me a girdle which was like purple. The fifth gave me a branch of rich olive wood. The sixth placed a wreath on my head. The seventh placed the priestly diadem on me and filled my hands with incense, in order that I might serve as priest for the Lord God. And they said to me, “Levi,

your posterity shall be divided into three offices as a sign of the glory of the Lord who is coming."²²

The Bible describes the anointing of several individuals as king in ancient Israel. These include Abimelech,²³ Saul (1 Samuel 9:16; 10:1; 15:1, 17), David (1 Samuel 16:1–13; also 2 Samuel 2:4, 7; 3:39; 5:3; 12:7; 1 Chronicles 11:3; 14:8), David's sons Absalom (2 Samuel 19:10), Adonijah, and Solomon (1 Kings 1:33–35, 39; 5:1; 1 Chronicles 29:22), Hazael and Jehu (1 Kings 19:15–16; 2 Kings 9:1–13; 2 Chronicles 22:7), Joash (2 Kings 11:12; 2 Chronicles 23:11), and Jehoahaz (2 Kings 23:30). Adonijah and Solomon were anointed at springs (En-Rogel and Gihon), which may imply that washing was part of the ceremony, perhaps accompanied by investiture in royal garb. The Book of Mormon also speaks of kings being anointed (Jacob 1:9; Ether 6:22, 27; see also Ether 9:4, 14–15, 21–22; 10:10, 16).

David recalled his anointing in his most famous psalm: "thou anointest my head with oil" (Psalm 23:5; cf. Psalm 45:7 [cited in Hebrews 1:9]; 89:20; 92:10). It was he who first used the term "the Lord's anointed" (the Hebrew from which we get *Messiah*) to denote the king.²⁴

"Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm," the Lord commanded through the psalmist (Psalm 105:15; cited in 1 Chronicles 16:22). The prophet Isaiah declared, "The Lord hath anointed me to preach" (Isaiah 61:1, see also verse 3).²⁵ In 1 Kings 19:16, we read that Elijah was told to anoint Elisha as prophet in his stead. More recently, the Lord called Joseph Smith "mine anointed one" (D&C 121:16; 124:76; 135:3; cf. 124:57, 91).

In his vision of the future temple, Zechariah saw two olive trees beside the candlestick, which is a representation of the tree of life, with its seven branches (Zechariah 4:2–3).²⁶ When he asked the angel what the trees meant, he was told

that “these are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth” (Zechariah 4:11–14).²⁷ The fact that the angel spoke of Zerubbabel (Zechariah 4:6–10) leads us to believe that this Jewish governor, of the royal line, was one of the two. The other was likely the high priest, Joshua, who is termed “the branch” (Zechariah 3:8; 6:11–13). In a similar vision of the future temple, John was told that the “two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth” were “two witnesses” or “prophets” who should defend the Jews against their enemies in the last days before being slain and then restored to life (Revelation 11:1–12). Thus, we have the offices of prophet, priest, and king represented in these related visions.

THE MESSIAH

The term *Messiah* derives from a Hebrew word generally rendered “anointed (one)” in the King James Bible. It is the Old Testament equivalent of the New Testament *Christ*, which derives from the Greek word also meaning “anointed (one).” In John 1:41, the term *Messias* is defined as Christ (cf. John 4:25). It was intended to identify Christ as the legitimate king of Israel.²⁸ As the anointed one, Christ is prophet,²⁹ priest,³⁰ and king.³¹ Indeed, he is “king of kings, and lord of lords” (Revelation 19:16).

When announcing his messianic mission (Luke 4:16–21), Jesus cited part of the following passage from Isaiah 61:1, 3, 10:

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me . . . to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.
. . . I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joy-

ful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels.

By declaring his anointing to preach, Jesus identified himself as a prophet and also as the expected Messiah or king of the Jews. The Isaiah passage refers to investiture with the “garments of salvation” and “the robe of righteousness” as part of the anointing process, just as we have seen in the anointing of Israelite priests.

The royal nature of the Messiah is found in Psalm 45:6–7, one of the royal psalms, which Hebrews 1:8–9 cites in reference to Jesus Christ: “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”

Peter and John, praying in the presence of the Sanhedrin, cited Psalms 2:2 (where the KJV Old Testament has “his anointed” while KJV Acts 4:26 reads “his Christ”), and spoke of “thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed” (Acts 4:27; cf. 10:38).³²

The term *Messiah* is found but once in the Old Testament of the King James Bible, in Daniel 9:25–26. Daniel wrote of the time when Israel would “anoint the most Holy” (Daniel 9:24).

WASHING AND ANOINTING

To Latter-day Saints, it is significant that Aaron and his sons were washed, anointed, and clothed in priestly garments at the tabernacle. These initiatory ordinances are associated in modern times with the temple (D&C 109:35, 53, 80; 124:39) and represent a call to the royal priesthood³³

in the kingdom of God.³⁴ It further symbolizes purification and the leaving behind of earthly cares while entering the Lord's house.

The Lord told Moses that the people were to "sanctify themselves" and to "wash their clothes" in preparation for meeting the Lord and becoming a "kingdom of priests" (Exodus 19:5–11). But they became neither kings nor priests, for they rejected the higher or Melchizedek Priesthood necessary to obtain that blessing (D&C 84:19–25).³⁵ This privilege was reserved for people of a later dispensation, to whom Peter wrote, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" (1 Peter 2:9).³⁶

The Lord instructed the Laodiceans to clothe themselves in white raiment and to anoint their eyes (Revelation 3:18). Speaking of Jerusalem as his bride, he declared through Ezekiel, "Then washed I thee with water; yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil. I clothed thee also with broidered work . . . and I girded thee about with fine linen," and other bridal apparel (Ezekiel 16:9–13).³⁷

This cleansing was particularly important when entering the temple. We read, for example, that David washed, anointed himself, and changed his apparel before going into the house of the Lord (2 Samuel 12:20). Similar purificatory ordinances were performed for prophets brought into the presence of God:

The Lord said to Michael: "Take Enoch and extract (him) from his earthly clothing. And anoint him with the delightful oil, and put (him) into the clothes of glory." And Michael extracted me from my clothes. He anointed me with the delightful oil; and the appearance of that oil is greater than the greatest light, its ointment is like sweet dew, and its fragrance like myrrh; and its shining is like

the sun. And I gazed at all of myself, and I had become like one of the glorious ones.³⁸

The shining appearance of Enoch following his anointing reminds us that one of the major uses of olive oil anciently was in lamps.

BAPTISM

The tie between temple washing and baptism is emphasized in the book of Revelation, where the cleansing from sins through Christ's Atonement is said to result in a royal calling for his followers:

And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. (Revelation 1:5–6.)

In baptism, we take upon ourselves the name of Christ (2 Nephi 31:13), becoming "Christians" or "anointed ones." Paul wrote that, in baptism, we bury our old sinful man and rise a new man in Christ (Romans 6:3–9; Colossians 2:12–13; cf. Mosiah 18:14; D&C 76:51). Symbolically, baptism initiates us into the celestial kingdom, where we become as God. The same is true of washing and anointing in the temple. Like baptism, the washing is designed to cleanse the initiate from sins.³⁹ At the same time, he or she receives a garment to give protection from Satan by continually reminding the person of his or her true identity.

The commingling of baptism with anointing and investiture with the garments of the priesthood shows the close tie made between baptism and the temple washing in ancient times. It is found in some pseudepigraphic works.

The *Hellenistic Synagogal Prayer* on behalf of the Catechumens implores, "Grant them (the) washing of regeneration, the garment of incorruption."⁴⁰ The *Apocalypse of Sedrach* 14:6 speaks of those who are "baptized with my baptism and anointed with my divine myrrh."⁴¹

Early Christianity, lacking the benefit of the temple (which was destroyed by the Romans in A.D. 70), began to connect the ordinance of baptism with the temple washing ceremony. This resulted in a transfer of related elements of the temple ceremony to the baptismal service.⁴²

By the third century A.D., the Christian baptismal ceremony had become very elaborate and contained a number of elements drawn from the temple (some of them indirectly through contemporaneous mystery religions). It began with a formal renunciation of Satan by the candidates. Then official exorcists shouted to drive out demons or evil spirits. This was followed by triune immersion, in the name of each member of the Godhead. Mosheim wrote, "On coming from the fount, the newly baptized tasted a mixture of milk and honey, in symbolism of their condition as new-born babies in Christ. To that succeeded anointing with oil," designation with the cross, and the use of salt. The initiates "returned home, adorned with crowns, and arrayed in white garments, as sacred emblems; the former, of their victory over sin and the world; the latter, of their inward purity and innocence."⁴³ At some periods, the eucharist or sacrament of the Lord's Supper was offered immediately after baptism.

In his *Catechetical Lectures*, Cyril of Jerusalem gave the full account of a baptismal ceremony at Easter. In the baptistry vestibule, facing westward, the proselytes renounced Satan, then turned to the east (the place of light) and declared their belief in the Trinity and in one baptism. They

then entered the inner chamber of the baptistry, took off their clothes, and were anointed with oil "from the hairs of your head to your feet." The oil had been exorcised and was considered to be "a charm to drive away every trace of hostile influence." They then went into the pool and were asked to affirm their belief in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. This was followed by triune immersion. Then they were anointed on the forehead, then the ears, nostrils, and breast. The preacher then declared to them, "Having been accounted worthy of this holy chrism, ye are called Christians." Then they were dressed in white garments and given the Eucharist. Cyril explained that the anointing symbolized the anointing of Christ, Aaron, and Solomon, as well as the anointing by the Holy Spirit.

Features found in the baptismal ceremony of about A.D. 200 can be compared to temple rites: The three questions concerning the proselyte's belief, the confession of faith, and the taking of an oath of fidelity are reminiscent of the basic laws taught in the temple. The three immersions are paralleled by the washing, while anointing is found in both ceremonies, and the initiate is dressed in white clothing. The renunciation of Satan is likewise found in both ceremonies. The use of salt in the early baptismal ceremony parallels the salting of sacrificial meats in the ancient temple (Leviticus 2:13).

In the period A.D. 313–476, new features were added to the baptismal ceremony. Insufflation after exorcism of the devil was patterned after Christ's breathing on the Twelve when he told them to receive the Holy Ghost (John 20:22). The priest uttered the Aramaic word *epphetha* ("open") in the ears of the proselyte (like anointing the ears to hear). The sign of the cross made anciently on the forehead and chest are also reminiscent of washing and anointing.

Indeed, christening in many churches is performed by making the sign of the cross on the forehead with holy water.

Most of these elements are tied together in the Gnostic *Gospel of Philip*:

It is from water and fire that the soul and the spirit came into being. It is from water and fire and light that the son of the bridal chamber [came into being]. The first is the chrism, the light is the fire. I am not referring to that fire which has no form, but to the other fire whose form is white, which is bright and beautiful, and which gives beauty. . . . Truth did not come into the world naked, but it came in types and images. One will not receive truth in any other way. There is a rebirth and an image of rebirth. It is certainly necessary that they should be born again through the image. The [bridegroom] and the image must enter through the image into the truth: this is the restoration. It is appropriate that those who do have it not only acquire the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, but that they have acquired it on their own. If one does not acquire the name for himself, the name ("Christian") will also be taken from him. But one receives them in the aromatic unction of the power of the cross. This power the apostles called "the right and the left." For the person is no longer a Christian but a Christ. The Lord [did] everything in a mystery, a baptism and a chrism and a eucharist and a redemption and a bridal chamber.⁴⁴

Of the various symbolic elements mentioned here, perhaps the most significant for the temple is the anointing ("unction" or "chrism"), whereby one becomes a "Christ" or "anointed one." Baptism in memory of his burial and resurrection (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12), followed by the anointing and eating the eucharist or emblems of the sacrament, are an initiation designed to bring godhood to the participant. Also of interest in this passage is that the oil is

likened to the Spirit. In the pseudepigraphic *Acts of Thomas* 26–27, the apostle baptized a group of converts, then “sealed” them by pouring oil on their heads and calling on the Holy Ghost to come upon them.⁴⁵

A survey of early literature indicates that the temple ceremony of washing is a symbolic repetition of baptism in water, cleansing the initiate of sin, while the garment which protects the initiate represents the Holy Ghost, and the anointing oil symbolizes the baptism of fire (for oil was used in lamps to make light anciently). This is discussed in more detail below.

Anciently, a new name played a role in washing and anointing and receiving of a garment; similarly, names are important in baptism. The name of the individual receiving the ordinance is pronounced, and he or she is baptized “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matthew 28:19; D&C 20:73) and thereby takes upon himself or herself the name of Jesus Christ.⁴⁶ In one of the Nag Hammadi documents we read, “I shall pronounce my name as I receive baptism [now] (and) for ever among the living (and) holy [names], and in the [waters], Amen.”⁴⁷ In yet another passage, we read:

The baptism which we previously mentioned is called “garment of those who did not strip themselves of it,” for those who will put it on and those who have received redemption wear it. It is also called “the confirmation of the truth which has no fall.” In an unwavering and immovable way he grasps those who have received the restoration while they grasp him. (Baptism) is called “silence” because of the quiet and tranquility. It is also called “bridal chamber” because of the agreement and the individual state of those who know that they have known him. It is also called “the light which does not set and is without flame,” since it does not give light, but

those who have worn it are made into light. They are the ones whom he wore. (Baptism) is also called "the eternal life," which is immortality; and it is called "all that which it is."⁴⁸

Finally, in connection with the early Christian practice of mingling temple rites with the baptismal ceremony, we note the following: "It is fitting for [thee at this time] to send thy Son [Jesu]s Christ and anoint us so that we might be able to trample [upon] the [snakes] and [the heads] of the scorpions and [all] the power of the Devil."⁴⁹

The anointing, either by oil or the Spirit which it symbolizes, is designed to protect the recipient from the devil.⁵⁰ As noted above, third-century Christians, at the time of baptism, were anointed and called upon to renounce the devil.

Through baptism, we are symbolically reborn as children of Christ. In a sense, then, baptism and anointing of proselytes was like the washing and anointing of newborn babies. Significantly, the dead were typically washed and anointed, symbolizing a transition into yet another state. In some traditions, such as that of the Mandaeans, a couple being married are washed, anointed, and clothed in white robes (reminding us of the term "bridal chamber" often used to describe initiation ceremonies).⁵¹

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

In baptism, we take upon ourselves the name of Christ (2 Nephi 31:13), becoming "Christians" or "anointed ones." The baptismal covenant is renewed in the sacrament, when we again take upon us the name of Christ by symbolically eating his flesh and blood and receiving the promise of his spirit (D&C 20:77; Moroni 4:3). This is what Jesus meant when he spoke of eating his flesh and drinking his blood (John 6:47–58). Anthropologists have often noted how, in

various cultures throughout the world, people believe that by eating the flesh of certain animals, one can take on the character of those animals. Among cannibals, the eating of human flesh is done not for nourishment but in an attempt to gain the strength of the slain enemy. Thus, eating Christ's flesh symbolically gives us his qualities.

Because olive oil is also used as a food, it is not surprising to see it associated with the bread and wine (or water) of the sacrament. This association is also due to the fact that the sacrament is a renewal of the baptismal covenant, as is clear from the prayers offered on the bread and wine or water.⁵² One Nag Hammadi text refers to "the bread and the cup and the oil."⁵³ The same text continues:

Spiritual love is wine and fragrance. All those who anoint themselves with it take pleasure from it. While those who are anointed are present, those nearby also profit (from the fragrance). If those anointed with ointment withdraw from them and leave, then those not anointed, who merely stand nearby, still remain in their bad odor. The Samaritan gave nothing but wine and oil to the wounded man. It is nothing other than the ointment. It healed the wounds, for "love covers a multitude of sins."⁵⁴

The presence of the sacrament (eucharist) at the time of baptism, along with anointing, in early Christian practice, continues to be reflected to some extent today. For example, in the Roman Catholic Church, it is believed that, at a certain point in the mass, when the prayer calling for the descent of the Holy Ghost on the eucharist has been completed, the Holy Ghost is present on the altar. The Holy Ghost, of course, is generally connected with baptism, since water baptism is sealed by confirmation and receiving of the Holy Ghost.⁵⁵ But its presence at the time of the sacra-

ment is also confirmed in the Latter-day Saint sacramental prayer, where there is a promise of the Spirit to all who eat and drink. Again, this is because the sacrament is a renewal of the baptismal covenant.

Interestingly, at the last supper, Jesus associated the sacrament with the washing of feet, which is a part of the washing and anointing ceremony⁵⁶ (John 13:1–5; see also D&C 88:140–41). Not long before that special meal, he had been anointed at Bethany preparatory to his death and burial (Matthew 26:12–13; cf. Mark 14:8–9; Luke 7:37–39, 44–46; John 12:3–4).

The connection between the sacrament and anointing with oil and receiving the garment and the new name is found in the pseudepigraphic story of Joseph and Aseneth. At one point, Joseph speaks of the man who will “eat blessed bread of life and drink a blessed cup of immortality and anoint himself with blessed ointment of incorruptibility.”⁵⁷

Prior to her conversion, Aseneth receives a blessing from Joseph. Laying his right hand on her head, he declares for her:

And let her eat your bread of life, and drink your cup of blessing, and number her among your people, that you have chosen before all (things) came into being, and let her enter your rest which you have prepared for your chosen ones, and live in your eternal life for ever (and) ever.⁵⁸

Receiving the bread and the cup of the sacrament of the Lord’s supper, in this story, is symbolic of conversion to the Lord and of being chosen to eternal life. Anxious to learn the meaning of Joseph’s words, Aseneth prays, and the Lord sends to her his chief angel. The messenger declares to her:

Behold, from today, you will be renewed and formed anew and made alive again, and you will eat blessed bread of life, and drink a blessed cup of immortality, and anoint yourself with blessed ointment of incorruptibility. . . . And your name shall no longer be called Aseneth, but your name shall be City of Refuge.⁵⁹

Thus, along with rebirth, the emblems of the sacrament and anointing, the young woman received a new name. So, too, in early Christianity, proselytes were given new names, as are Jewish proselytes and babies christened in various churches. An interesting feature of the story of Aseneth is that it was the angel who bestowed the new name, as in several biblical stories.⁶⁰

The angel also gave to Aseneth a honeycomb which he said was made from dew and came from paradise,⁶¹ much as early Christian converts were given honey after baptism. The honeycomb is the "bread of life":

And the man stretched out his right hand and broke a small portion off the comb, and he himself ate and what was left he put with his hand into Aseneth's mouth, and said to her, "Eat." And she ate. And the man said to Aseneth, "Behold, you have eaten bread of life, and drunk a cup of immortality, and been anointed with ointment of incorruptibility."⁶²

Following their marriage, Aseneth sang a hymn of praise, in which she recalled the angel's visit in terms that remind us of both the sacrament and temple marriage: "And to the chief of the house of the Most High, and gave me to eat bread of life, and to drink a cup of wisdom, and I became his bride for ever and ever."⁶³

The use of the honeycomb with the bread and wine, emblems of the body and blood of Christ, is significant. Compare Jesus' statement that he was the "bread of life"

from heaven (John 6) with the description of the heavenly manna as honey-flavored (Exodus 16:31). The heavenly books eaten by John (Revelation 10:9–10) and Ezekiel (Ezekiel 3:3) were sweet to the taste (see also Psalm 119:103). The tie with oil is strengthened by the statement in Numbers 11:8 that manna tasted like “fresh oil.” In the next verse, it is compared to dew.

In this connection, we note that the four streams that flowed from the tree of life in the garden of Eden are said to have consisted of honey, milk, oil, and wine—all elements associated with early Christian baptism.⁶⁴

Ephrem made the rivers a type of the flowing of oil in prebaptismal anointing.⁶⁵ He also noted that the river of Eden was divided into four parts as a symbol of “the outpouring of oil. . . . That [river] waters the garden of delights; this one gives light to the Holy Church. That [river] makes trees flourish; this one, bodies. For that of Eden has four names, proclaiming rivers; and the oil has three names, trumpets of baptisms.” This, wrote Murray, refers to baptismal anointing in the names of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.⁶⁶ In this connection, it is reminiscent of the parallel between the members of the Godhead and the emblems of baptism (water, spirit, and blood) in the late addition to 1 John 5:6-9.⁶⁷

Ephrem declared, “The olive is the symbol of Christ, for from him spring milk, water and oil; milk for babes, water for young men and oil for the sick. Likewise the ‘Olive’ gave these also, water and blood, in his death, and gave oil in [or by] his death.”⁶⁸

Aphrahat, Ephrem, and Cyril of Jerusalem used olive symbolism to denote Christ as the source of the sacraments. This is because of the importance of the prebaptismal anointing in the Syrian Church. Murray noted that

Aphrahat's mention of perfection coming by the anointing is paralleled in Hippolytus's *Traditio Apostolica* 5, "unde unxisti reges sacerdotes et profetas, which is still recited in the Roman rite in the Chrism Mass on Maundy Thursday."⁶⁹

ANOINTED WITH THE HOLY GHOST

At the time John baptized Jesus, "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power" (Acts 10:37–38). St. Basil, commenting on this passage, cited Isaiah 61:1 ("The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me") as a reference to the descent of the Holy Ghost on the newly-baptized Christ. Indeed, Jesus related the Isaiah passage to his own mission (Luke 4:16–21). St. Basil also cited Psalm 45:7 ("Therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows") and indicated that the two passages refer to the role of the Holy Ghost in baptism.⁷⁰

An early pseudepigraphic work agreed with St. Basil: "And when he is come forth of the water of Jordan, then shall he anoint with the oil of mercy all that believe on him, and that oil of mercy shall be unto all generations of them that shall be born of water and of the Holy Ghost, unto life eternal."⁷¹

Similar thoughts are expressed in the pseudepigraphic *Gospel of Philip*: "Jesus revealed [himself at the] Jordan: it was the [fulness of the kingdom] of heaven. He who [was begotten] before everything was begotten anew. He [who was] once [anointed] was anointed (a)new. He who was redeemed in turn redeemed (others)."⁷²

The same text indicates that we are "begotten again" through the baptisms of water and the Holy Spirit. "We are anointed through the Spirit. . . . For this reason it is fitting

to baptize in the two, in the light and the water. Now the light is the chrism."⁷³ The explanation continues:

The chrism is superior to baptism, for it is from the word "chrism" that we have been called "Christians," certainly not because of the word "baptism." And it is because of the chrism that "the Christ" has his name. For the Father anointed the Son, and the Son anointed the apostles, and the apostles anointed us. He who has been anointed possesses everything. He possesses the resurrection, the light, the cross, the Holy Spirit. The Father gave him this in the bridal chamber;⁷⁴ he merely accepted [the gift].⁷⁵

The text also discusses the role of the spiritual and physical elements by saying, "It is through water and fire that the whole place is purified—the visible by the visible, the hidden by the hidden. There are some things hidden through those visible. There is water in water, there is fire in a chrism."⁷⁶

The comparison of the chrism or anointing with oil with the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost seems very appropriate. Washing and anointing go together like baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost, which is called baptism by fire. Anciently, the oil was used to make fire in lamps and is hence a symbol of fire and also of the Spirit. This is why the Holy Ghost is often compared to anointing with oil and why, in early Christianity, anointing followed baptism.⁷⁷

While the oil provides food and light and is also used to clean and protect the skin, the Holy Ghost fulfills similar functions for the spirit, teaching it, cleansing it from sin, and providing the light by which we can see our path.

Joseph Smith also noted the connection between anointing and receiving the Holy Ghost. During the dedication of the Kirtland Temple, he prayed, "Let the anointing of thy

ministers be sealed upon them with power from on high. Let it be fulfilled upon them, as upon those on the day of Pentecost" (D&C 109:35–36), when the Holy Ghost fell upon the apostles in Jerusalem (Acts 2:1–4). The anointings in the Kirtland temple were specifically designed to prepare the participants to be "endowed with power from on high" (D&C 38:32, 38; 43:15–16; 95:8–9; 105:10–12, 33), reminding us that the pentecostal experience of the apostles was a fulfillment of Jesus' promise that they would be "endued with power from on high" and become witnesses of him, beginning in Jerusalem (Luke 24:47–49; Acts 1:4, 8; cf. 2 Timothy 1:6–8). This returns us to Acts 10:37–38, where we read that "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power."

Saint Jerome cited a passage from the *Gospel According to the Hebrews* to the effect that the ancient prophets had been "anointed of the Holy Spirit" (*Against Pelagius* 3.2).⁷⁸

Paul wrote, "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Corinthians 1:21–22). The parallel between anointing and the Spirit in this passage is also assumed by John in his first epistle:

But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. . . . And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life. . . . But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. And now, little children abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence. . . . If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him. (1 John 2:20, 25, 27, 28, 29.)

John clearly had in mind the Holy Ghost, through which we are reborn and which Jesus had indicated would teach the apostles of all things (John 14:26; 16:13; see D&C 93:28).⁷⁹ This identification is confirmed by a revelation given to Joseph Smith in which the “Comforter” or “Holy Spirit of promise” of John 14 “is the promise which [is given] unto you of eternal life, even the glory of the celestial kingdom” (D&C 88:3–4). John’s epistle makes this same point concerning the role of the Holy Ghost.

In the revelation to Joseph Smith, the Lord further indicated that the washing ceremony, which Jesus had performed just before promising the Holy Ghost to his apostles (John 13) is necessary in order to realize the promise:

And I give unto you, who are the first laborers in this last kingdom, a commandment that you assemble yourselves together, and organize yourselves, and prepare yourselves, and sanctify yourselves; yea, purify your hearts, and cleanse your hands and your feet before me, that I may make you clean; That I may testify unto your Father, and your God, and my God, that you are clean from the blood of this wicked generation; that I may fulfil this promise, this great and last promise, which I have made unto you, when I will. (D&C 88:74–75.)

This assurance, according to Joseph Smith, comes “by revelation and the spirit of prophecy, through the power of the Holy Priesthood” (D&C 131:5). The Lord declared to him that we can be “sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise through him whom I have anointed” (D&C 132:7, 18–19), once again tying the Holy Ghost to anointing.

In one of the so-called *Odes of Solomon*, it is the Spirit that brought the writer before the Lord, where he was anointed:

[The Spirit] brought me forth before the Lord’s face,

and because I was the Son of Man, I was named the Light, the Son of God. . . . For according to the greatness of the Most High, so she made me; and according to his newness he renewed me. And he anointed me with his perfection; and I became one of those who are near him. And my mouth was opened like a cloud of dew.⁸⁰

The opening of the mouth is mentioned in Psalm 51 in connection with purificatory washing, and can be tied to an ancient Egyptian ceremony.⁸¹ The mention of dew in connection with the anointing is found elsewhere. In the Slavonic *2 Enoch* 6, Enoch is shown "the treasures of the dew, like olive oil."⁸² Another pseudepigraphic work notes that when "the Anointed One" comes, vines will yield abundantly and winds will "bring the fragrance of aromatic fruits and clouds at the end of the day to distill the dew of health."⁸³

In another text, the apostle Thomas anoints a group of women who have changed their clothes, then baptizes them and gives them bread and wine, saying, "Let us receive the dew of thy goodness." He indicated to them that the oil was from the same tree (olive) of which the cross had been made. He also compared their new clothing with the linen cloth in which Christ's body was wrapped, asking the Lord that they might be "girt about with thy power."⁸⁴

We noted earlier that, in the fourth century A.D., baptism was accompanied by insufflation and an exhortation to open the ears. The basis for this practice was Jesus' breathing on his apostles and commanding them, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost" (John 20:22). St. Ignatius tied this practice to Christ's anointing:

For this end did the Lord suffer the ointment to be poured upon his head, that he might breathe immortality unto his church. Be not ye anointed with the evil odour

of the doctrine of the prince of this world; let him not lead you away captive from the life which is set before you.⁸⁵

Like the lamp, the oil symbolically makes Christ the "light of the world" (John 1:4–8; 8:12; 9:5; 12:46; Mosiah 16:9; cf. Hebrews 1:3). A Syriac text, speaking of the tree of life, equates it to Christ: "The good tree is there in that world of light. . . . He is the Tree of Life, giving life to all things by his fruits."⁸⁶ The fruits are identified with the fruits of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22–25. At the end of Homily XXIX, "On the discipline of the Body," the tree of life is identified with the life-giving Spirit.⁸⁷

In Doctrine and Covenants 88:5–13; 93:2, it is Christ who provides light. This is generally considered to be a power other than the Holy Ghost, which Christ asked the Father to send on his disciples. The spirit is considered to be the source of life in the Coptic document entitled "The Paraphrase of Shem," where the Lord speaks of "my beautiful garment of light," also called "my universal garment," and says that he was "wrapped in the light of the Spirit," his garment being "from the power of the Spirit." He adds, "For I am a helper of everyone who has been given a name . . . and I gave the eternal honor."⁸⁸

In three Old Testament passages, the Hebrew text reads that "the Spirit clothed" someone (Judges 6:34; 1 Chronicles 12:18; 2 Chronicles 24:20). The King James translators, not understanding the idiom, rendered all three passages "the Spirit came upon" someone. In this, we are reminded of the passage in *Pseudo-Philo* 20:2–3, where Joshua dons the garments of Moses and is stirred by the same Spirit that Moses had possessed.⁸⁹

The identification of the Holy Ghost with oil, which provides enlightenment, is clear in a modern revelation explaining the parable of the ten virgins (Matthew

25:1–13).⁹⁰ The five wise virgins, who kept their lamps supplied with oil, are the ones who “have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide” (D&C 45:57). “The power of my Spirit quickeneth all things. Wherefore, be faithful, praying always, having your lamps trimmed and burning, and oil with you, that you may be ready at the coming of the Bridegroom” (D&C 33:16–17).

St. Basil wrote, “Through the Holy Spirit comes our restoration to paradise, our ascension into the kingdom of heaven, our return to the adoption of sons, our liberty to call God our Father, our being made partakers of the grace of Christ, our being called children of light, our sharing in eternal glory.”⁹¹

Basil undoubtedly had Paul’s words to the Philippians in mind: “That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world” (Philippians 2:15). But Paul borrowed the concept from Christ, who instructed his disciples, “Ye are the light of the world. . . . Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:14–16). This light is Christ (3 Nephi 18:24).

Notes

1. The list of references is too long to include here, but see, for example, the following chapters: Exodus 29; Leviticus 2; 6; 7; 9; 14; 23; 24; Numbers 6; 7; 8; 15; 28; 29.
2. Again, the list is too long to include here.
3. The King James Bible routinely uses the word *candlestick* when a lampstand is meant and *candle* when a lamp is meant. Candles, common to Jacobean England, were not used in the ancient Near East.
4. Oil for this lampstand is mentioned in Exodus 25:6; 27:20; 35:8, 14, 28; 39:37; Leviticus 24:2; Numbers 4:9, 16.
5. See, for example, Deuteronomy 28:39–40 (cited in Micah 6:15);

2 Chronicles 28:15; Psalms 104:15; Amos 6:6; and cf. Deuteronomy 33:24.

6. In *Acts of Thomas* 5, the attendees at a wedding banquet anoint the top of the head, the nostrils, the ears, the teeth, and around the heart. The anointing and dressing of brides in white clothing is mentioned in *Pseudo-Philo* 40:6.

7. A few olive trees remain in the remote valleys of the Tassili n'Ajjer mountains of southern Algeria, some of which may be as old as three to four thousand years. Because of the slow maturation of the olive tree, the Arabs say that one plants olive trees not for oneself, but for one's grandchildren. Olive trees and humans mature after about the same amount of time.

8. James H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 vols. (Garden City: Doubleday, 1983), 1:611.

9. From the parable in Judges 9:8–15, one has the impression that both the olive tree and the vine were considered to be noble and worthy of being anointed to reign over the trees.

10. Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:667, n. 4q, notes that the tree is identified as the vine by the second-century sages: R. Meir (TB *Sanhedrin* 70a) and R. Judah b. Ilai (*Genesis Rabbah* 15:7) and that it is mentioned in *Apocalypse of Abraham* 23:5 and the *Palea Historica* (ed. Vassiliev, p. 190). In the *Apocalypse of Abraham* 23:1–10, the fruit of the tree with which Eve was tempted is described as "like the appearance of a bunch of grapes of the vine" (*ibid.*, 1:700). According to *Apocalypse of Moses* 20, Eve ate the fruit of the fig tree (in *ibid.*, 2:281, n. 20d, Charlesworth notes the various traditional identifications of this tree).

11. Origen, *Contra Celsum* VI, 27. Cf. Hippolytus, *Traditio Apostolica* V, 2. In the Babylonian Talmud, see TB *Ḥagigah* 12b; Pirque Rabbi Eliezer 35. In the Jerusalem Talmud, see *Berakot* 1:9b.

12. *Life of Adam and Eve* 36:1–2 (cf. *Apocalypse of Moses* 9:1–3), in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2:272–73, who notes that "MSS E1 and E2 add 'a branch' after 'give me'." The tree of life is often said to have exuded a delightful odor. One pseudepigraphic work quotes the Lord as saying of the returning Israelites that "the tree of life shall give them fragrant perfume, and they shall neither toil nor become weary" (4 *Ezra* 2:10–12 in *ibid.*, 1:527; the version in KJV Apocrypha, 2 *Esdras* 2:11, says "They shall have the tree of life for an ointment of sweet savor").

13. *Life of Adam and Eve* 40–42 (cf. *Apocalypse of Moses* 13:1–4). The story is also found in the Latin A and Greek versions of the *Descent of Christ* 3 (Latin B chapter 4). Adam's children are said to have

anointed themselves with his body after he died (*Life of Adam and Eve* 11:13; 12:7). According to a number of sources, the tree of life is for the pious in the world to come (4 *Ezra* 2:12; 1 *Enoch* 25:4–5; *Testament of Levi* 18:11; Revelation 2:7; 22:14; *Lekah Genesis* 2:9). According to the *Book of the Rolls* f.96b, Christ was anointed with myrrh from the garden of Eden, which had been preserved along with paradisiacal incense and gold brought by the wise men.

14. *Gospel of Philip* 2:3, 73, in James M. Robinson, gen. ed., *The Nag Hammadi Library in English* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 144.

15. For this identification, see my article, "Borrowings from Zenos," in this volume.

16. For the significance of this, see my articles, "Borrowings from Zenos," and "Vineyard or Olive Orchard?" in this volume.

17. The sacred oil seems to have been used to purify various sorts of impurities. In Leviticus 14:12–29, for example, we read that the priest used it to cleanse lepers.

18. Aphrahat, *Demonstrations* XXIII, in Robert Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom: A Study in Early Syriac Tradition* (Cambridge University Press, 1975), 115 (see Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, chapter 3, "The Vineyard, the Grape and the Tree of Life").

19. Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 115 and n. 2.

20. *Ibid.*, 115.

21. See also the descriptions of the high priest in Leviticus 21:12 and Numbers 35:25. The provision for modern anointings of literal descendants of Aaron is made in D&C 68:20.

22. *Testament of Levi* 8:2–11, in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:791.

23. In the case of Abimelech, the anointing is couched in Jotham's parable of the trees (Judges 9:8, 15).

24. 1 Samuel 2:35; 24:6, 10; 26:9, 11, 16, 23; 2 Samuel 1:14, 16; 19:21; 22:51; 23:1; 1 Chronicles 16:22; 2 Chronicles 6:42; Psalms 2:2; 18:50; 20:6; 45:7; 84:9; 89:20, 38, 51; 105:15; Lamentations 4:20; Habakkuk 3:13. In Isaiah 45:1, the term is applied prophetically to Cyrus, king of Persia. From 2 Nephi 25:18, some have assumed that only Jesus could be called by the term *Messiah*. While it is true that only he brings salvation, the term, meaning "anointed one," has been applied to many people anciently in the Hebrew Bible.

25. Christ cited this passage in reference to his own mission (Luke 4:18; see D&C 138:42), as we shall see later.

26. Even in Mesopotamian art, the tree of life is often depicted with seven branches. It appears thus on Jewish lamps of the Herodian (Roman) period.

27. In this case, the word *messiah* does not appear in the text. The Hebrew reads, literally, “sons of the shining.”

28. The wise men, seeking the newborn Jesus, asked after the “king of the Jews” (Matthew 2:2). Following his triumphal entry into Jerusalem (patterned on the royal processions of old), Christ was asked by Pilate if he were “the king of the Jews” (Matthew 27:11; Luke 23:3). During Christ’s trial, Pilate called him by this title (Mark 15:9, 12; John 18:33, 39; 19:14–15)—a fact not lost on the Roman soldiers who dressed Christ as a king and mocked him (John 19:3). The official charge of which Jesus was found guilty and for which he was executed was being “king of the Jews” without the consent of Caesar and the Roman senate (Matthew 27:37; Mark 15:26; Luke 23:38; John 19:19).

29. Christ is the prophet foreseen by Moses in Deuteronomy 18:15–16. See Acts 3:2; 7:37; 1 Nephi 22:21; 3 Nephi 20:23.

30. Christ’s role as high priest is discussed in Hebrews 2:17; 3:1; 4:14; 5:6; 6:20; 7:24; 10:21. In 1 Peter 2:25, he is called the shepherd and bishop of souls.

31. Jesus is termed a king in Revelation 1:5; 3:7; 5:5; 17:14; 19:16; 22:16. See also Matthew 2:6; 21:5; 27:42. He was given the usual royal welcome (Zechariah 9:9; cf. 1 Kings 1:32, 38) when he entered Jerusalem riding on the ass (Matthew 21:1–9), which is probably what prompted Pilate to consider him the king of the Jews for purposes of trial.

32. The washing and anointing of Christ’s feet is a subject of importance in the gospels (Mark 14:8; Luke 7:37–38, 46; John 1:2; 12:3.), as is the fact that the women at the tomb intended to anoint him for burial (Mark 16:1; Luke 24:1).

33. In D&C 132:41, sealing in marriage is called “the holy anointing.” In D&C 131:2, it is termed “an order of the priesthood.”

34. As we prove ourselves worthy and become kings, Christ becomes “King of Kings, and Lord of Lords” (Revelation 19:16). That the heirs of the celestial kingdom become kings is indicated by the fact that they will receive crowns, sit upon thrones (Revelation 3:21), and rule the nations (Revelation 1:26–27).

35. Cf. Exodus 20:18–19; see also D&C 107:18–19. See John A. Tvedtnes, *The Church of the Old Testament*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1980), 35–37. Brigham Young said, “If they had been sanctified and holy, the children of Israel would not have travelled one year with Moses before they would have received their endowments and the Melchisedec Priesthood” (*JD* 6:100).

36. Hebrews 12:28–29, citing Deuteronomy 4:24 (cf. Exodus 19:18),

also alludes to the events at Sinai: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire." The fire is, of course, also a feature of oil when used in lamps.

37. *Clementine Recognitions*, IV, 35–36, identifies the wedding garment of Matthew 22:11–12 with baptism.

38. *2 Enoch* 22:8–9, in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:138–39. Cf. *2 Enoch* 56:2, and see Moses 7:2–4.

39. The water, in this case, representing the blood of Christ, in which we are to wash our garments. See Revelation 7:14; 19:8; 1 Nephi 12:10–11; Alma 5:21–27; 13:11–13; 3 Nephi 27:19–20; D&C 88:85.

40. *Apostolic Constitutions* 8:6:6, in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2:688.

41. *Apocalypse of Sedrah* 14:6, *ibid.*, 1:613.

42. For some of these ideas, see Hugh Nibley, "Christian Envy of the Temple," in *Mormonism and Early Christianity*, vol. 4 in *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1987), 391–434.

43. Johann Lorenz von Mosheim, *An Ecclesiastical History from the Birth of Christ to the Beginning of the Eighteenth Century*, trans. Archibald MacLaine (London: Tegg, 1842), 1:261–62.

44. *Gospel of Philip* 2:3, 67, in Robinson, *Nag Hammadi Library in English*, 140.

45. Montague Rhodes James, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1955), 375–76.

46. For this reason, the baptism of infants at the time of naming was an easy transition in Christianity.

47. *Melchizedek* 9:1, 16, in Robinson, *Nag Hammadi Library in English*, 402.

48. *The Tripartite Tractate* 1:5, 128–29, in *ibid.*, 93–94.

49. *A Valentinian Exposition, On the Anointing*, 11:2, 40, in *ibid.*, 440.

50. In the pseudepigraphic *Acts of Thomas* 25, the apostle asks the Lord to cleanse his converts "with thy washing and anointing them with thine oil from the error that encompasseth them." James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, 375.

51. See Ethel S. Drower, *The Mandaean of Iraq and Iran* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1937). The Mandaean priests dress the bridegroom in a white robe and apron for the wedding ceremony. The Mandaeans, who claim to be descended from the disciples of John the Baptist, perform baptism for both the living and the dead.

Standing in the water with the priest, the candidate raises his right hand and takes an oath, then crouches in the water three times. He is then given bread and water and is anointed with oil.

52. Cf. the covenant of baptism (2 Nephi 31:13; Mosiah 18:8-13; 3 Nephi 12:1-7) and the covenant of the sacrament (D&C 20:77; 3 Nephi 18:6-7, 10-11; Moroni 4:3).

53. *Gospel of Philip* 2:3, 75, in Robinson, *Nag Hammadi Library in English*, 145.

54. *Gospel of Philip* 2:3, 77-78, in *ibid.*, 146-47. The quote at the end of the passage is from 1 Peter 4:8.

55. The Holy Ghost is also connected with resurrection, of which baptism is a symbol, and hence the easy transition in Catholicism, for example, to the belief that the body and blood of Christ are "resurrected" on the altar by being transformed from the wafer and wine.

56. Clergy of the Eastern Orthodox churches continue the practice, and it was reinstated in the Roman Catholic Church by Pope John XXIII a mere three decades ago.

57. *Joseph and Aseneth* 8:5, in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2:211-12.

58. *Joseph and Aseneth* 8:9, in *ibid.*, 2:213.

59. *Joseph and Aseneth* 15:5, 7 (cf. 19:5), in *ibid.*, 2:226.

60. Cf. the naming of John the Baptist (Luke 1:13, 59-63) and of Jesus (Matthew 1:21, 24; Luke 1:31) before they were born, and the renaming of Abram/Abraham (Genesis 17:1-5) and Jacob/Israel (Genesis 32:27-28).

61. *Joseph and Aseneth* 16:14, in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2:227.

62. *Joseph and Aseneth* 16:15-16, in *ibid.*, 2:229.

63. *Joseph and Aseneth* 21:21, in *ibid.*, 2:238.

64. *2 Enoch* 8:5; *Perek Gan Eden*.

65. Ephrem, *On Virginitv* IV, 14.

66. Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 128.

67. Cf. the birth of water and the Spirit in John 3:5-8 and see John 7:37-39, where Jesus, speaking in the temple during the feast of tabernacles (when water was poured on the altar and worn-out priestly clothing was soaked in olive oil and burned), mentions water and the Spirit.

68. *Diatessaron Commentary*, 21,11, in Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 125.

69. *Ibid.*, 116.

70. Basil, *On the Spirit* 12.

71. *Descent of Christ* 3 (Acts of Pilate, Latin A text), in James,

Apocryphal New Testament, 127–28. According to the Book of the Rolls 98b-99a, water collected when the Holy Ghost hovers over it (as in Genesis 1:2 and at Christ's baptism), when mixed with oil, can be used to anoint the sick and those possessed by devils.

72. *Gospel of Philip* 2:3, 70–71, in Robinson, *Nag Hammadi Library in English*, 142. Though the Bible does not mention an anointing at the time of Christ's baptism, it does note the descent of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 3:16–17; John 1:30–34), which is compared in the *Gospel of Philip* to the anointing with oil.

73. *Gospel of Philip* 2:3, 69, in *ibid.*, 141.

74. The "bridal chamber" of the New Testament and early Christian works is the Holy of Holies of the temple or the celestial kingdom.

75. *Gospel of Philip* 2:3, 74, in Robinson, *Nag Hammadi Library in English*, 144.

76. *Gospel of Philip* 2:3, 57, in *ibid.*, 135. This passage is immediately preceded by comments on the heavenly garments.

77. We have already noted that water baptism was anciently accompanied by both anointing and the giving of a new name. But the term *christen*, meaning "to baptize" or "to name," originally referred to the anointing.

78. I am indebted to Benjamin Urrutia for bringing this to my attention.

79. The Holy Ghost, as the Testator, bears witness of Christ. Alma compared the word of God to the tree of life, which is nourished inside the believer by his faith, and explained the process by which one can gain a testimony of the truth of God's word (Alma 32:37–43).

80. *Odes of Solomon* 36:3, 5–6, in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2:765–66.

81. See Benjamin Urrutia, "Psalm 51 and the 'Opening of the Mouth' Ceremony," in Sarah I. Groll, ed., *Egyptological Studies* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1982).

82. In Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:113.

83. *2 Baruch* 29:3–7, in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:630–31. The same document tells us that when the Lord reigns, "health will descend in dew" (*2 Baruch* 73:1–2, in *ibid.*, 1:645). Early Jewish and Christian works tell of the Lord blessing Adam and Eve after the Fall with winds carrying the fragrance of Eden's trees. Numbers 11:8–9 describes manna falling as dew and having the taste of "fresh oil." The oil used to anoint Aaron is compared to dew in Psalm 133:2–3.

84. *Acts of Thomas* 156–58, in James, *Apocryphal New Testament*, 432–33.

85. *Epistle of St. Ignatius to the Ephesians* 17, in A. Cleveland Coxe, *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, vol. 1 in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Buffalo: Christian Literature, 1885), 56.

86. *Memra* 21, *Liber Graduum*, in Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 129. According to 4 Baruch 7:16–17 and Book of the Rolls f-103a, the tree of life fructifies all the other trees.

87. Cited and discussed in Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, 129.

88. *The Paraphrase of Shem*, 7:1, 12–13, in Robinson, *Nag Hammadi Library in English*, 313–14.

89. In Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2:329.

90. The parable may have been based on Proverbs 13:9: “The light of the righteous rejoiceth; but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.”

91. Basil, *On the Spirit* 15, in Blomfield Jackson, *The Treatise de Spiritu Sancto: The Nine Homilies of the Hexaemeron and the Letters of Saint Basil the Great* (New York: Christian Literature, 1895), 22.

Olive Culture in the Second Temple Era and Early Rabbinic Period

Stephen D. Ricks

The olive, so vital a part of the economy of ancient Israel, maintains its place on the physical, economic, and religious landscape of Israel in the Second Temple period and beyond. In this paper, I discuss the olive during this time period from its primary religious literature: the Apocrypha, the Pseudepigrapha, the Mishnah, and Talmud. Given the very considerable contacts and cross-pollination between the peoples of Jewish Palestine and other parts of the ancient Mediterranean, I make some detours into classical, Christian, and ancient Near Eastern sources. Despite some overlap in topic with other papers, I hope that this will add to the fruitfulness of the discussion. First, I examine some ways in which the olive is treated in the period of the Second Temple and of the early rabbis, examining themes that are marginally relevant to the allegory of the olive tree in Jacob 5. Then I discuss those that bear on the themes presented there more or less directly.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

In Similes and Metaphors

The word *olive* and its cognates occur in only five verses in the Old Testament apocryphal literature. Three of these are in similes. In *Ben Sira*, Wisdom describes herself as

growing “like a palm tree in En-gedi, and like rosebushes in Jericho; like a fair olive tree in the field.”¹ Later, Ben Sira, waxing eloquent in the praise of Simeon the priest, the son of Johanan, describes him as being “like an olive tree laden with fruit.”²

In a passage reminiscent of Isaiah 24:13, *2 Esdras* (Fourth Ezra) speaks of a time when, “just as in an olive orchard three or four olives may be left on every tree, or just as when a vineyard is gathered, some clusters may be left by those who search carefully through the vineyard, so in those days three or four shall be left by those who search their houses with the sword.”³ Three or four olives remaining on a tree is a reference to the Mosaic injunction not to beat the branches of an olive tree a second time for fruit, but to leave what remains for the traditionally least protected segments of Israelite society: the alien, the fatherless, and the widow (Deuteronomy 24:20).

As a Symbol of Victory or Honor

In the apocryphal book of *Judith*, following her stunning victory over Holofernes, “All the women of Israel gathered to see her, and blessed her, and some of them performed a dance in her honor. She took ivy-wreathed wands in her hands and distributed them to the women who were with her; and she and those who were with her crowned themselves with olives wreaths. She went before all the people in the dance, leading all the women, while all the men of Israel followed, bearing their arms and wearing garlands and singing hymns.”⁴ Although the olive possessed a wide symbolic inventory in the Old Testament, including health, life, thanksgiving, and peace, the wearing of an olive wreath as a sign of victory was a Greek not a Jewish symbol, and probably an indication of Hellenistic influence on

Jewish practice.⁵ The phrase here is redolent of the Pauline expression in 2 Timothy 4:7–8, where Paul, employing a metaphor from Hellenistic athletic competitions, states that, having fought the good fight and finished the course, he looks forward to the “crown of righteousness” that is laid up in store for him.

Second *Maccabees* 14:3–4 records that “a certain Alcimus, who had formerly been high priest” but had disqualified himself for that office, in order to regain access to that office went to King Demetrius and presented to him “a crown of gold and a palm”—typical and obligatory signs of honor and obeisance—and, as a further sign of honor, “some of the customary olive branches from the temple.” Jonathan Goldstein, in discussing this passage in 2 *Maccabees*, translates the term *olive branches* (*thallōn*) “gifts,” although he concedes that these “gifts” probably took the form of olive branches.⁶

As a Product of Ancient Israel

Even before the entrance of the Israelites into the land of Israel, the olive was viewed as one of the premier products of the land. It was among the “seven species,” or products, of Israel. During the Feast of Tabernacles—a festival connected with the ingathering of the fruits of the land—the Israelites lived in tents made of branches of olive, pine, myrtle, willow, palm, and “thick trees” (Leviticus 23:40–43; Nehemiah 8:14–18). In the pseudepigraphic literature it is regularly mentioned as one of the land’s most important trees⁷ and is frequently mentioned as the quintessential symbol of Israel’s fruitfulness,⁸ and as a sign of God’s great love among the trees.⁹ In the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*, alone among the agricultural products of ancient Israel, the olive bestows a blessing on one of Jacob’s sons.

In the *Testament of Judah*, while “heaven blessed Reuben; the earth blessed Issachar; . . . the mountains blessed Joseph; . . . the sun blessed Gad; the olive tree blessed Asher.”¹⁰

So important was the olive that it became one of the symbols of Israel itself by the beginning of the Early Rabbinic period. Though there were olives of different varieties and various sizes, the olive was designated as a standard size for many *halakhot*, and the expression “land of olive trees” was interpreted as “a land whose main standard of measurement is the olive.”¹¹ Rabbinic literature contains innumerable details about olive oil, its types and methods of extraction. Thus, for instance, we learn from the *Babylonian Talmud* that “one should not even stir the soil under the olive trees [during the Festival Week or Sabbatical Year]”¹² and that Beth Hillel ruled that olive trees may not be cut down after they blossom,¹³ or that the tithe on the olive tree is to be determined by its blossoming.¹⁴

As a Symbol of Ancient Israel

In Jeremiah 11:16, the prophet declares, “The Lord called thy name a leafy olive tree, fair with goodly fruit.” Reflecting on Jeremiah’s statement, the Midrash extends and develops the symbol of Israel as an olive tree, summing up thus:

Just as the olive is marked out for shrivelling while it is yet on its tree, after which it is brought down from the tree and beaten, and after it has been beaten is brought up to the vat and placed in a grinding-mill, where it is ground and then tied up with ropes (through which the oil is filtered), and then stones are brought (which press upon the olives) and then at last it yields its oil, so it is with Israel: the heathen come and beat them about from place to place, imprison them and bind them in chains, and surround them with officers, and that at last do Israel

repent [of their sins] and God answers them. . . . What made Jeremiah compare Israel to an olive tree? Because all liquids commingle one with the other, but oil refuses to do so and keeps separate. So Israel does not mingle with the heathen.¹⁵

As the Tree of Life or Tree of Paradise

Section 88 of the Doctrine and Covenants was designated by Joseph Smith as the “olive leaf . . . plucked from the Tree of Paradise.” While there is no canonical writing that explicitly associates the olive with the tree of life (which is what I understand by the tree of paradise) or any other tree in paradise (by which I understand the Garden of Eden), this connection is frequently made in the literature of the Second Temple period. According to the Slavonic 3 *Baruch* 4:7, “When God made the garden and commanded Michael to gather two hundred thousand and three angels so that they could plant the garden, Michael planted the olive and Gabriel, the apple; Uriel, the nut; Raphael, the melon; and Satanael, the vine. . . . All the angels planted the various trees.” When Noah wished for the third time to determine whether the waters of the flood had subsided from the earth, he sent out a dove, which returned with an olive branch in its mouth. In the *Genesis Rabbah*, the rabbis ask further, “Whence did she bring it? . . . R. Birai (Berekiah) said: The gates of the Garden of Eden were opened for her, and from there she brought it.”¹⁶ In the *Apocalypse of Moses*, Adam, who was suffering terrible pain, bade his wife Eve “arise and go with our son Seth near to paradise, and put earth upon your heads and weep and pray God to have mercy upon me and send his angel to paradise, and give me of the tree out of which the oil floweth, and bring it me, and I shall anoint myself and shall have rest from my com-

plaint."¹⁷ Elsewhere in the *Apocalypse of Moses*, the "tree" is referred to as the "Tree of Life."¹⁸ On the basis of these passages, L. S. A. Wells and the great Louis Ginzberg identify the tree of life with the olive.¹⁹ Later Jewish tradition occasionally debated the specific botanical species of the tree of life, some asserting that it was a fig tree, while others held it to be an olive tree or a date palm.²⁰

In early Christianity, similar beliefs were held concerning the oil-producing properties of the tree of life. According to the Judeo-Christian *Recognitiones*, "Although indeed He [Christ] was the Son of God, and the beginning of all things, He became man; Him first God anointed with oil which was taken from the wood of the tree of life. From that anointing therefore He is called Christ. Thence, moreover, He Himself also, according to the appointment of His Father, anoints with similar oil every one of the pious when they come to His kingdom, for their refreshment after their labours, as having got over the difficulties of the way; so that their light may shine, and being filled with the Holy Spirit, they may be endowed with immortality."²¹ In the *Gospel of Nicodemus* a story is related similar to that found in the *Books of Adam and Eve*. Here Adam asks to receive the "oil of the tree of mercy to anoint my body when I was sick." But Seth is told that it may only be received at the end of time, to raise up the bodies of the dead.²² Given the venerable association of the oil of the olive tree with life, health, and rejuvenation, and, in the Judeo-Christian tradition, with resurrection, immortality, and the tree of life itself, is it surprising that it has remained the anointing substance *par excellence*?

The story of the quest of Seth for the oil of life or mercy, popular during the period of the late Second Temple and of the early centuries of Christianity, took on a life of its own

in later centuries. Recast as the quest of Seth for the True Cross, the story was widely retold, appearing in Mandeville's *Travels*, Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*, and Caxton's translation of the *Legenda Aurea*.²³

As a Symbol of Kingship

The olive serves as a symbol of kingship in the pseudographic *Joseph and Aseneth*, where Joseph, following his elevation to second in the kingdom, is given a royal staff in his left hand "and in his right hand he held outstretched an olive branch, and there was plenty of fruit on it, and in the fruits was a great wealth of oil."²⁴ Further, in the *Testament of Levi* there is a striking passage describing Levi's priestly consecration/royal coronation.

There I again saw the vision as formerly, after we had been there seventy days. And I saw seven men in white clothing, who were saying to me, "Arise, put on the vestments of the priesthood, the crown of righteousness, the oracle of understanding, the robe of truth, the breastplate of faith, the miter for the head, and the apron for prophetic power." Each carried one of these and put them on me and said, "From now on be a priest, you and all your posterity." The first anointed me with holy oil and gave me a staff. The second washed me with pure water, fed me by hand with bread and holy wine, and put on me a holy and glorious vestment. The third put on me something made of linen, like an ephod. The fourth placed . . . around me a girdle which was like purple. The fifth gave me a branch of rich olive wood. The sixth placed a wreath on my head. The seventh placed the priestly diadem on me and filled my hands with incense, in order that I might serve as priest for the Lord God.²⁵

Among the various acts described in Levi's priestly consecration/royal coronation, we are here interested particularly in his receipt of an olive branch. Such a branch, known

from Israelite-Jewish tradition to have been originally cut from the tree of life by Adam before being driven from the Garden of Eden, served to symbolize the possessor's power to bestow life.²⁶ These traditions of the ruler's rod being a twig from the tree of paradise were inherited by the Christian church during the Middle Ages, where the Virgin Mary is often equipped as *regina coeli* with a sceptre that is apparently a *virga*, the symbolic representation of the paradise twig.²⁷ In the same manner, the Christian bishop usually carries not a *baculum* (staff) but a *virga*. The Christian ruler, however, holds both *baculum* and *virga*.²⁸

THEMES OF JACOB 5 AND THE LITERATURE OF THE SECOND TEMPLE PERIOD AND EARLY RABBINIC ERA

Among the many details of olive culture touched on in Jacob 5, both tame and wild olive trees are prominently mentioned. The mention of wild olive trees is particularly noteworthy since they are known only in the northern part of the land of Israel, particularly in the Galilee and Mount Carmel regions, and are never specifically mentioned in the Old Testament.²⁹ This is, perhaps, not so surprising, since most of the authors of the Old Testament were from the southern part of Israel and would have had little or no direct experience with the wild olive. Might it also be evidence that Zenos was a northerner?³⁰

Pruning, nourishing, dunging, and engrafting, all mentioned in connection with the care of the olive in Jacob 5, are also mentioned in the literature of the Second Temple era and known from subsequent agricultural practices in Palestine.³¹ Of particular interest is the question of grafting wild branches onto a tame olive tree, an issue that also impinges on Paul's famous allegory of the olive tree in

Romans 11:17–24.³² In Paul’s allegory, the cultivated olive (*kallielaios*) is Israel, from which some of the branches were broken off (usually understood as Jews who rejected Christ, and so lost their place as God’s people), while shoots of the wild olive (*agrielaios*)³³ were grafted in their place (interpreted as the inclusion of Gentiles in the people of God). Eventually, however, God is able to graft the natural branches back into their own stock (Jews who “do not persist in their unbelief” will be restored, and so “all Israel will be saved”). The stock remains the same; it is only in the branches that changes occur. Similarly Israel, the people of God, is a continuous entity (cf. the Old Testament use of the olive as a symbol for Israel), but its membership is subject both to the exclusion of native Israelites and the inclusion of the alien stock of Gentile believers.³⁴

There are similarities and differences between the accounts in Romans 11 and Jacob 5. Two questions about such grafting will concern us here: (1) the frequency—or even feasibility—of the practice of grafting wild olive branches into a tame olive tree and (2) its permissibility according to Jewish law. According to many commentators, beginning with Origen, assume that Paul’s theology is better than his knowledge of horticulture. According to Origen, the grafting of wild olive branches into a tame olive tree is simply unknown.³⁵ But, contrary to the opinion of this great and profoundly influential scholar, the grafting of wild olive branches into tame trees *is* attested in ancient times—as well as in the modern period—as a means of rejuvenating an unproductive olive.³⁶ The Roman writer Lucius Junius Columella (first century B.C.) notes that “it also frequently happens that, though the trees are thriving well, they fail to bear fruit. It is a good plan to bore them with a Gallic auger and to put a green slip taken from a wild olive

tree tightly into the hole; the result is that the tree, being as it were impregnated with fruitful offspring, becomes more productive."³⁷ The function of such grafting is of particular interest to us: it enhances productivity of the tame tree. Columella further states:

Any kind of scion can be grafted on any tree, if it is not dissimilar in respect of bark to the tree in which it is grafted; indeed if it also bears similar fruit and at the same season, it can perfectly well be grafted without any scruple. Further, the ancients have handed down to us three kinds of grafting; one in which the tree, which has been cut and cleft, receives the scions which have been cut; the second, in which the tree having been cut admits grafts between the bark and the hard wood (both these methods belong to the season of spring); and the third, when the tree receives actual buds with a little bark into a part of it which has been stripped of the bark.³⁸

Dalman reports on the practice in Lebanon of grafting a wild olive tree onto a tame one in order to give the tame tree renewed strength. Similarly, Sven Linder reports that grafting branches from a young wild olive tree into the roots or trunk of a tame one was practiced in Greece. It is significant that in both instances such grafting was done for the purpose of rejuvenating old or ailing trees—precisely the reason given in the passages in Romans and Jacob. Further, the fact that such a practice was known in more than one place around the Mediterranean is of some importance.³⁹ According to the eighteenth-century traveler Stephan Schulz, "While I was in Jerusalem I heard from several individuals that, if a tame olive tree lost its leaves, it was possible to obtain wild olive branches from the Jordan valley and to graft them into the tame tree so that it might bear good fruit."⁴⁰

Two other passages from Jewish tradition are relevant

for the discussion. Philo applied a somewhat similar figure of speech to Israelites and proselytes. In *De Exsecrationibus*, Philo describes the troubles that will befall the land of Israel and its inhabitants as a result of the Israelites' apostasy from God before the onset of the Messianic age. But at that time the foreigner converting to Judaism would be honored and praised because he had come over to God's people, thereby assuring himself of a place in heaven as his reward, about which it was not proper to speak. On the other hand, those born as Israelites who failed to keep the commands—because they "counterfeited the noble coin of their descent"—would be cast down to Tartaros and to the deepest darkness, so that men might see and learn from their example that God will graft into the stump the new branches of the proselyte in place of the decaying and unfruitful branches of the born Israelites.⁴¹ Similarly, in the Babylonian Talmud, R. El'azar (circa A.D. 270) is reported to have asked: "What is meant by the text, 'And in thee shall the families of the earth be blessed?' The Holy One, blessed be He, said to Abraham, 'I have two goodly shoots to engraft [*l^ehabrîk*, which has the same root consonants as *BRK of *w^enibr^ekû* "shall be blessed"] on you: Ruth the Moabite and Naamah the Ammonite."⁴² Both of these women belonged to idolatrous nations and were grafted upon the stock of Israel. The former was the ancestress of David and the latter the mother of Rehoboam and his distinguished descendants Asa, Jehoshaphat, and Hezekiah.

A second question dealing with engrafting relates to the permissibility, in Jewish law, of grafting branches from a wild olive onto the stock of a tame one. While grafting itself was well known in Israel during the Second Temple period, the grafting of diverse species is contrary to rabbinic principles. According to Leviticus 19:19, fields are forbidden to

be sown with “mixed seeds”; a similar prohibition exists in Deuteronomy 22:9: “You shall not sow your vineyard with mixed seed, lest the fruit of the seed you have sown and the fruit of your vineyard be defiled.” These were held by the rabbis to imply a prohibition against grafting between heterogeneous fruit trees. The Mishnaic tractate *Kil’ayim* (*Diverse Kinds*) deals in considerable detail with the prohibition of mixing heterogeneous “seeds,” the crossing and yoking together of diverse animals, and against covering oneself with material composite of wool and linen, all topics mentioned in these passages in Leviticus and Deuteronomy (Leviticus 19:19; Deuteronomy 22:9–11). According to the principle of *kil’ayim*, “seeds” include the five species of grain (wheat, barley, oats, rye, and spelt), legumes, and greens whose roots or stalks are used for human consumption. Grafting is forbidden not only between trees containing edible fruit (*‘ēṣ ma’akāl*) and those containing inedible fruit (*‘ēṣ serāḳ*),⁴³ but also between different species of trees bearing edible fruit.⁴⁴ Thus, we read in M *Kil’ayim* 1:4: “As for trees, the pear and the crustumenian pear, or the quince and sorb apple, do not constitute *kil’ayim* one with the other. The apple and the crab apple, or the peach and almond, or the jujube and lote, even though they are similar one to the other, yet constitute *kil’ayim* one with the other (in respect of grafting only).” We are further informed that “it is not proper to graft one tree onto a tree of another sort”⁴⁵ and that “it is not proper to graft olive trees into the trunk of a date palm, because that would be tree to tree (of another sort).”⁴⁶ Similarly, in *Midrash Psalms* 128 (257b) Rabbi Jehoshua b. Levi (circa 250) is reported to have said: “Your wife is like a grapevine within your house, your sons like olive seedlings (Psalm 128:3). Just as there is no grafting of olive trees (to trees of other kinds, so that fruits of different

kinds are produced) there will be nothing reprehensible among your sons.”

But are the tame and wild olives different species? It is unclear whether they were viewed as different or as similar species by the rabbis. The olive and the wild olive are never specifically mentioned as representing “mixed seeds,” and the rabbinic taxonomy of *kil'ayim* is less than perfectly perspicuous. Even though the rabbinic discussion is based on ancient Israelite principles, it is uncertain that they would have been viewed similarly in the pre-exilic period, Zenos's age. Thus, the relevance to Jacob 5 of the rabbinic discussion on grafting remains tentative.

CONCLUSION

When we look for commonalities in the horticultural details mentioned in Jacob 5 and those found in the literature of Judaism of late antiquity, we are not disappointed: we find them in profusion. Beyond these, however, the symbolism of the olive in the literature of ancient Judaism—as a sign of kingship and authority, and as a symbol of the tree of life—provides us with further significant insights into the meaning of the olive and its products in the Restoration.

Notes

1. *Ben Sira* 24:14.
2. *Ben Sira* 50:10.
3. *2 Esdras* (Fourth Ezra) 16:29–31.
4. *Judith* 15:12–16:1.
5. Cf. Michael Blech, *Studien zum Kranz bei den Griechen* (New York: de Gruyter, 1982), 136, 142–45, 153–54, 375.
6. Jonathan Goldstein, *II Maccabees* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 485.
7. *Letter of Aristeas* 63, 112; *Jubilees* 13:6, 21:12.
8. *Sibylline Oracles* 4:17; *Apocalypse of Daniel* 5:10; 10:1; *1 Enoch* 10:19.

9. *Apocalypse of Sedrach* 8:2.
10. *Testament of Judah* 25:2.
11. TB *Berakhot* 41b.
12. TB *Mo'ed Qaṭan* 3a.
13. TB *Pesaḥim* 53a.
14. TB *Rosh Hashanah* 13b; cf. TB *Mo'ed Qaṭan* 4b, 9b.
15. *Exodus Rabbah* 36:1.
16. *Genesis Rabbah* 33:6; cf. *Sibylline Oracles* 1:251; 2 *Baruch* 77:23.
17. *Apocalypse of Moses* 9:3; cf. *Life of Adam and Eve* 36:2, where the tree is called the "tree of his mercy."
18. *Apocalypse of Moses* 28:1. In 2 *Enoch* 8:3–5 (shorter recension), the tree of life and the oil of life are both mentioned, although the olive tree, which was "always discharging the oil of its fruit," is described as being "alongside" the tree of life.
19. Louis Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, 7 vols. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1968), 5:119; L. S. A. Wells, "The Books of Adam and Eve," in R. H. Charles, ed., *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament: Pseudepigrapha* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1976), 143.
20. Geo Widengren, *The King and the Tree of Life in Ancient Near Eastern Religion*. *Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift* (1951:4): 38; Widengren, "Royal Ideology and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," in F. F. Bruce, ed., *Promise and Fulfilment: Essays Presented to Professor S. H. Hooke* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1964), 207–8; Widengren, "Til det sakrala kungadömetts historia i Israel," *Horae Soederblomianae* 1/3 (1947): 4. In contrast, according to W. E. Oesterly, "Early Hebrew Festival Rituals," in S. H. Hooke, ed., *Myth and Ritual* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933), 141, the Egyptian, Babylonian, and Assyrian tree of life was the date; a similar view is expressed in 1 *Enoch* 24:3–5. In Zoroastrianism it is the *haoma* plant that appears to function in this role, and the *kalpavriksha* in Hinduism; cf. August Wünsche, *Die Sagen vom Lebensbaum und Lebenswasser: Altorientalische Mythen* (Leipzig: Pfeiffer, 1905), 3.
21. *Recognitiones* I, 45, in "Clementine Recognitions," in Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, eds., *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951), 8:89.
22. *Gospel of Nicodemus* 19/*Descent of Christ* 3; cf. Origen, *Contra Celsum* VI, 27, where a group affirms at the time of their baptismal anointing, "I have been anointed with white ointment from the tree of life"; cf. Hippolytus, *Refutatio Omnium Heresium* IX, 10.
23. Esther C. Quinn, *The Quest of Seth for the Oil of Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), vii.
24. *Joseph and Aseneth* 5:5 (7), in James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The*

Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, 2 vols. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 2:208. This whole scene, with olive branch, oil, and fruit, is redolent of the ancient Greek *eiresiōnē*, "an olive branch covered with wool covered with first fruits of different sorts," Otto Kern, "Eiresiōnē," in Georg Wissowa, *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1905), 5:2135, a "thank offering to the gods" for the harvest, Martin P. Nilsson, *Greek Folk Religion* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1961), 29, and a symbol of fertility; cf. *ibid.*, 36, 39; Witold Klinger, "L'Irésione grecque et ses transformations postérieures," *Eos* 29 (1926): 157–74; Albrecht Dieterich, "Sommertag," *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 8 (1905): 82–117, reprinted in *Albrecht Dieterich: Kleine Schriften* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1911), 322–52; S. Follet, "Deux vocables religieux rares attestés épigraphiquement," *Revue de Philologie* 48 (1974): 30–32; Wilhelm Mannhardt, *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte aus nordeuropäischer Überlieferung Erläutert* (Berlin: Borntraeger, 1877), 214–29.

25. *Testament of Levi* 8:1–11, in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:790–91.

26. E. A. W. Budge, *The Book of the Bee* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1886), 50, provides a Christian parallel to the tradition of Adam taking a piece of the tree of life with him, which served as a sign of kingship:

When Adam and Even went forth from Paradise, Adam, as if knowing that he was never to return to his place, cut off a branch from the tree of good and evil—which is the fig-tree—and took it with him and went forth; and it served him as a staff all the days of his life. After the death of Adam, his son Seth took it, for there were no weapons as yet at that time. This rod was passed on from hand to hand unto Noah, and from Noah to Shem; and it was handed down from Shem to Abraham as a blessed thing from the Paradise of God. . . . At that time there were wars everywhere, and an angel took the rod, and laid it in the Cave of Treasures in the mount of Moab, until Midian was built. There was in Midian a man, upright and righteous before God, whose name was Yathro. When he was feeding his flock on the mountain, he found the cave and took the rod by divine agency; and with it he fed his sheep until his old age. When he gave his daughter to Moses, he said to him, "Go in, my son, take the rod, and go forth to thy flock." When Moses had set his foot upon the threshold of the door, an angel moved the rod, and it came out of its own free will towards Moses. And Moses

took the rod, and it was with him until God spake with him on Mount Sinai.

27. R. Bauerreis, *Arbor Vitae: Der "Lebensbaum" und seine Verwendung in Liturgie, Kunst und Brauchtum des Abendlandes* (Munich: Neuer Filser-Verlag, 1938), 117–20.

28. Geo Widengren, *The King and the Tree of Life*, 40–41; cf. Karl von Amira, *Der Stab in der germanischen Rechtssymbolik: Abhandlungen der königlichen bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch, philologisch, und historische Klasse* 25:1 (1909): 113–21, esp. 114–15.

29. The phrase *ʿēṣ šemen*, which appears in the description of the construction of the Temple of Solomon in 1 Kings 6:23, 31, 32, 33, has been rendered "wild olive tree," though without any clear justification. As Jehuda Feliks, "Olive," in *Encyclopedia Judaica*, 12:364, notes, the wild olive is a prickly shrub (cf. TB *Baba Mezia*), which does not make it a particularly good candidate for use as a source of lumber.

30. John L. Sorenson, "The 'Brass Plates' and Biblical Scholarship," *Dialogue* 10/4 (Autumn 1977): 33–34, stresses the likely northern origin of the plates of brass, as well as of the prophet Zenos.

31. Gustav Dalman, *Arbeit und Sitte in Palästina*, 7 vols. (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1935), 4:153–95, provides a detailed discussion of the culture of the olive in Palestine, based both on ancient sources (Old Testament, New Testament, Mishnah, Talmud, Midrash, etc.) and practices current during the early decades of the twentieth century.

32. G. W. Ahlström, "zayith," in G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, David E. Green, tr. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981), 4:58–62; A. G. Baxter and J. A. Ziesler, "Paul and Arboriculture: Romans 11:17–24," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 24 (1985): 25–32; Myles M. Bourke, *A Study of the Metaphor of the Olive Tree in Romans XI* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1947); Gustaf Dalman, *Arbeit und Sitte in Palästina*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1935), 4:153–290; William M. Ramsay, "The Olive-Tree and the Wild-Olive," in Ramsay, *Pauline and Other Studies in Early Christian History* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1906), 219–50; K. H. Rengstorf, "Das Ölbaum-Gleichnis in Röm 11, 16 ff.: Versuch einer weiterführenden Deutung," in E. Bammel, C. K. Barrett, and W. D. Davies, eds., *Donum Gentilicum: New Testament Studies in Honour of David Daube* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978), 127–64; Roy A. Stewart, "Engrafting: A Study in New Testament Symbolism and Baptismal Application," *Evangelical Quarterly* 50 (1978): 8–22.

33. The *agrielaios* is not an uncultivated specimen of *kallielaios*, but a different species, probably the oleaster.

34. In *A study of the Metaphor of the Olive Tree in Romans XI*, Myles Bourke provides a detailed discussion of the meaning of the allegory without, however, discussing the horticultural feasibility of the engrafting described there.

35. Origen, *Commentary on Romans VIII*, 10.

36. Cf. Ramsay, "The Olive Tree and the Wild-Olive," 219–50.

37. Columella, *De Re Rustica V*, 9, 16.

38. Columella, *De Re Rustica V*, 11, 1; cf. *ibid.* V, 11, 12; cf. *De Arboribus* 26–27, where much the same material is repeated verbatim.

39. Sven Linder, "Das Pfropfen mit wilden Ölzweigen (Röm. 11, 17)," *Palästinajahrbuch* 26 (1930): 40–43. Dalman, *Arbeit und Sitte in Palästina*, 4:184, cites Linder but says that his Arab friends found the idea ludicrous.

40. Georg Benedikt Winer, *Biblisches Realwörterbuch*, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Reclam, 1847–49), 2:171.

41. Philo, *De Exsecrationibus* 6; cf. Hermann L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*, 4 vols. (Munich: Beck, 1954), 3:291.

42. TB *Yebamot* 63a.

43. M *Kil'ayim* 6:5.

44. M *Kil'ayim* 1:7; TY *Kil'ayim* 27a; TB *Orlah* 61; TB *Siphra* 89a.

45. M *Kil'ayim* 1:7.

46. M *Kil'ayim* 1:10.

Vineyard or Olive Orchard?

John A. Tvedtnes

Readers of Zenos's parable in Jacob 5 have been perplexed by the use of the term "vineyard" to denote a parcel of ground in which olive trees are planted. Perhaps one should expect the word "orchard" instead. This word, however, appears but twice in the King James Version of the Bible (Song of Solomon 4:13; Ecclesiastes 2:5), and is a translation of the word *pardēs*, a late Hebrew borrowing from Persian and source of the Greek word behind the English term "paradise."¹

Two questions must be addressed in order to make sense of the Zenos parable: (1) Is it reasonable to believe that, in the ancient Near East, olive trees were planted amid grapevines? (2) Does the Hebrew word rendered "vineyard" have a larger range of meaning?

The Hebrew word *kerem* (plural *k'ramîm*) is generally rendered "vineyard" in KJV. It is clearly associated with "wine," "vine," or "grapes" in a number of Bible passages.²

In the Bible, "vineyard" is often contrasted with "field"³ or with "seed" (Isaiah 5:10; Jeremiah 35:6–7, 9). For example, in Deuteronomy 23:24–25, the vineyard and its grapes are paralleled by "standing corn," while in 2 Kings 19:29 (Isaiah 37:30), we read of sowing and reaping and planting vineyards and eating "the fruits thereof." In still other passages, the vineyard and its fruit are contrasted with the garden and its fruit (Isaiah 1:8; Amos 9:14).⁴

From such examples, one is tempted to suggest that “vineyard” denotes anything in contrast with “field” and could include an orchard of olive trees. This does not hold elsewhere, however. There are, for example, passages in which vineyards are contrasted with both fields and olive trees and their products,⁵ or with gardens, fig trees, and olive trees (Amos 4:9). In other passages, the vineyard is contrasted with olive trees.⁶ In Nehemiah 9:25, we read of vineyards, oliveyards, and fruit trees.⁷

There are some biblical passages, however, that imply that a *kerem* is not restricted to viticulture. For example, Ahab requested of Naboth, “Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs” (1 Kings 21:2). The Hebrew word rendered “herbs” in KJV is *yrq*, which denotes green vegetables. Similarly, in Song of Solomon 8:11–13, the vineyard appears to be considered a garden. One chapter earlier, we read of pomegranates growing in the vineyard alongside grapes: “Let us go up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grapes appear, and the pomegranates bud forth” (Song of Solomon 7:12).

In the Mishnah (*Zeraim* 4:1–8:1), we read that the rabbis argued about what else could be planted in a vineyard without breaking the law of diverse kinds.⁸ Most agreed that vegetables, grains, and flowers could be planted in a vineyard, provided there was adequate spacing between the various species. They also discussed the question of training vines over non-fruit trees and fruit trees, and both the olive and fig tree are mentioned.⁹ The sages concluded that if a vine was trained over only part of a fruit tree, the ground under the rest of the tree could be sown with other seeds. Clearly, to the rabbis of two millennia ago, there was

no problem with having olive trees in vineyards. This, however, may not reflect the situation at the time of Zenos.

In the New Testament, we read of a fig tree planted in a vineyard, in a passage which has similarities of language with the account in Jacob 5:

He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down. (Luke 13:6–9.)

The cognate to *kerem* in most of the Semitic languages means “vineyard.” This is true of Canaanite¹⁰ and Aramaic.¹¹ In Ugaritic, it apparently means “grape,”¹² while in Geez it means “vine.”¹³ The Arabic form is given the meaning “vine, vineyard” in two sources.¹⁴ But Lane attests only the construction *'ibnu 'l-karm*, “grape or bunch of grapes,” literally, “offspring of the vineyard.” Indeed, Lane gives *karam* the meaning of “generous, good, fertile land,” which implies a more general meaning for the word.¹⁵

Egyptian, which is related to the Semitic language family, has two basic forms for “vineyard.” The older form has a final *n* and is variously written K3N K3N K3N , etc. and is to be read *k3nw*.¹⁶ The use of both the tree and the vine determinative at the end of the word is evidence that it really means both “vineyard” and “orchard.” Both meanings, along with “garden,” are given by Erman and Grapow¹⁷ for the later form of the word, *k3m*, variously written K3M K3M K3M , etc.



Olive grove, showing the trees well tended and the ground carefully cleared. Jacob's use of the term "vineyard" to depict a place where olive trees were cultivated is in keeping with ancient Near Eastern terminology and practices.

According to Černý,¹⁸ the later form became Demotic *k3m*, "garden," with subsequent Coptic forms SAA²BF (*ḏôm*), Sahidic (*ḏom*, *ḏôme*), and Bohairic (*jôm*, a place-name), all meaning "garden, vineyard, property."¹⁹ We may also note Egyptian *k3my*, "gardener of wine/flowers,"²⁰ which Černý²¹ lists with Demotic *k3my*, "gardener" and with Coptic SB (*ḏme*), SSfB (*ḏmē*), Fayyumic (*ḏimē*), "gardener, vinedresser."²² Compare also Egyptian *k3ry*, "gardener of wine/flowers,"²³ and *k3ny*, "gardener of wine/fruit."²⁴

Erman and Grapow list Hebrew *krm* as a cognate to the later Egyptian form *k3m*. Albright, however, believed that the younger Egyptian form was a borrowing from Semitic.²⁵ If Egyptian borrowed from Semitic, however, we would expect the Egyptian form to be *krm* rather than *k3n* or *k3m*. Albright contends that the use of the glottal stop (3) shows

that it is “a very old” loanword. However, the Egyptian form with final *m* is, as Erman and Grapow have indicated, clearly the later form—the one which, as noted above, continued into Demotic and Coptic. It is much more likely that the Egyptian is merely cognate to Semitic.²⁶

The *Encyclopedia Miqra'it* notes that “The Egyptian *k3mu* could be used for both a vineyard of vines and a plantation of mixed fruit trees. . . . The scribe Any counted twelve vines that he planted in his garden, and alongside them 100 fig trees, 170 date palms, and the like.”²⁷

The early Syriac Fathers used both the grapevine and the olive tree to symbolize Christ.²⁸ The grapevine imagery, of course, derives from John 15, where Christ is the vine and his disciples the branches. Ephrem had this passage in mind when he wrote of the olive tree, whose “leaves stand fast” through the winter and “are an image of the faithful who persevere in Christ the Olive.” The Christians who hang on Christ “are like olive-leaves in winter . . . planted wholly in him.” (Murray, commenting on this passage, noted that the Syriac word used to denote an individual grape sometimes is used of the olive.²⁹) Similarly, several of the Syriac Fathers used the olive tree grafting imagery of Romans 11 in reference to the “true vine” and its branches in John 15. The interchange of the olive tree and the vine seems to have bothered them not a bit. The same can be said of the Jews who built the third century A.D. synagogue at Dura Europus, where the tree of life is depicted in a mosaic as both a tree and a vine. Rabbi Bahya, on Genesis 2:9, wrote that the trees of life and of knowledge formed a single tree at the base, which branched into two.

We conclude, then, that the use of the term “vineyard” to depict a place where olive trees were planted is not an error in the Zenos account in Jacob 5, but that it is perfectly

in keeping with ancient practices and with the imagery of the vineyard.³⁰

Notes

1. The word also appears in the Hebrew text of Nehemiah 2:8, where KJV renders it "forest."

2. Genesis 9:20–21; Leviticus 19:10; Deuteronomy 23:24; 28:30, 39; Judges 9:27; 2 Kings 18:32; Song of Solomon 2:15; Isaiah 5:1–4; 16:10; 27:2; Amos 5:11; 9:14; Zephaniah 1:13.

3. Exodus 22:5; Leviticus 19:9–10; 25:3–4; Numbers 16:14; 20:17; 21:22; 1 Samuel 22:7; Job 24:6; Psalm 107:37; Proverbs 24:30; 31:16; Isaiah 16:10; Jeremiah 32:15; 39:10; Micah 1:6. The same Hebrew word is used in Nehemiah 5:3–5, though rendered "lands" in KJV.

4. In Ecclesiastes 2:4–5, we have the tripartite parallel of vineyards, gardens, and orchards; however, the latter is the Persian borrowing referred to above.

5. Deuteronomy 24:19–21; 28:38–40; 1 Samuel 8:14–15; 2 Kings 18:32; Isaiah 36:17; 1 Chronicles 27:26–28. In Nehemiah 5:11, KJV renders the word "lands" instead of "fields." In Judges 15:5, we read of shocks, standing corn, vineyards, and olives. The Hebrew text actually reads "vineyards of olives," but, following LXX, KJV and all ancient and modern Jewish and Christian authorities read "vineyards and olives."

6. Deuteronomy 6:11; in Exodus 23:11; Joshua 24:13; 2 Kings 5:26. KJV renders the word "oliveyards." It is perhaps significant that the grape and olive harvests take place at the same time and were anciently celebrated in the Mosaic feast of Tabernacles.

7. Again, "oliveyards" should read "olive trees," while the Hebrew term rendered "fruit trees" actually means "edible trees."

8. "Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds: lest the fruit of thy seed, which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled" (Deuteronomy 22:9).

9. Cf. Hermas' *Similitudes* 2, where he wrote of the unfruitful elm tree as a support for the vine, enabling the vine to produce more abundantly.

10. H. Donner and W. Röllig, *Kanaanäische und Aramäische Inschriften* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1969), Band III, Glossaire und Indizes, 12b.

11. For Jewish Palestinian Aramaic, see Franz Rosenthal, *An Aramaic Handbook* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1969), I/2, 63b. For Syriac, see Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, Charles A. Briggs, editors (hereinafter BDB), *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), 501b; and Cyrus H. Gordon, *Ugaritic*

Textbook (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1974), Glossary No. 1306. For Samaritan, see Rosenthal, *An Aramaic Handbook*, II/2, 6b.

12. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, No. 1306.

13. BDB, 501b; Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, No. 1306.

14. BDB, 51b; Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, No. 1306.

15. E. W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon* (London, 1863–93), 2999c.

16. A. Erman and H. Grapow, *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache* (Leipzig, 1926–31), V, 107, 6–7.

17. *Ibid.*, V, 106, 3–9.

18. Jaraslov Černý, *Coptic Etymological Dictionary* (Cambridge Univ., 1976), 330.

19. W. E. Crum, *A Coptic Dictionary* (Oxford, 1962), 817b.

20. Erman & Grapow, *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache*, V, 108, 13–16.

21. Černý, *Coptic Etymological Dictionary*, 331.

22. Crum, *A Coptic Dictionary*, 817B.

23. Erman & Grapow, *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache*, V, 108, 13–16.

24. Erman & Grapow, *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache*, V, 107, 8–9.

25. W. F. Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1968), 157, fn. 13.

26. The earlier Egyptian form, *k3n*, should be compared to Akkadian *karanu/kiranu*, “wine, grapevine, grape.” See *The Assyrian Dictionary* (Chicago: Oriental Institute, Univ. of Chicago, 1956), VIII.202b. W. Muss-Arnoldt, *A Concise Dictionary of the Assyrian Language* (New York: Westermann, 1895), lists the Akkadian along with Aramaic (*qreyna*), Greek (*karoinon*; also *karuinion* and *karunon*), “sweet wine,” Latin *carenum* and *caroenum*. The Greek looks suspiciously like an attempt to adapt the word to a form which would comprise, in its latter half, the word *oinos*, “wine.” It was, of course, borrowed by Latin, and appears to have also been borrowed by Aramaic, which is unrelated to any of the other Semitic forms—including Akkadian—by virtue of its initial *q* in place of *k*.

27. *Encyclopedia Miqra'it* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1962), IV:318, my translation. Any's garden is depicted on the walls of his tomb (Tomb 81) at Thebes. It contained a total of 481 trees of 23 varieties, plus vines.

28. See the discussion in chapter 3 (“The Vineyard, the Grape and the Tree of Life”) in Robert Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom: A Study in Early Syriac Tradition* (Cambridge University Press, 1975).

29. *Ibid.*, 113.

30. For more about this imagery, see my article “Borrowings from the Parable of Zenos” in this volume.

Botanical Aspects of Olive Culture Relevant to Jacob 5

Wilford M. Hess and Daniel J. Fairbanks

John W. Welch and Jonathan K. Driggs

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The olive tree allegory of Jacob 5 offers a detailed metaphorical description of the dispersion and gathering of the House of Israel. While authors have practical and literary reasons for using an allegorical style, among its most effective uses is to illustrate an idea by drawing an analogy to a familiar setting. Although olives are not mentioned in the Book of Mormon after Jacob 5, olive culture was clearly a familiar and important part of agriculture in Palestine in Lehi's day and in Old Testament times generally. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the botanical and horticultural aspects of olive culture inherent in Zenos's allegory and compare them with ancient and modern information about raising and cultivating olives.

Ancient horticulturalists had a very good understanding of horticultural principles as they applied to olive culture. Because plants were ever present in their environment, ancient peoples often associated societal events with seasonal changes in surrounding vegetation. In the Mediterranean region, one of the few areas in the world that is well suited for olive culture, there are indications that its

inhabitants were familiar with olives very early and used olives symbolically in their writings and ceremonies. Even in villages and cities people had plants adjacent to their dwellings and referred to important events, such as births, marriages, and deaths, in terms of tree blossoms, fruit harvests, or other seasonal events. For this reason it was natural for Israelite prophets to use plant imagery in their messages. In addition, much of the populace in ancient times was illiterate, and precise time keeping, a relatively modern phenomenon, was not yet available. Therefore, it was customary in ancient times to refer to botanical imagery because of the common person's understanding of regular botanical events and seasonal changes.

Etymology

The Indo-European root of the word *olive* is thought to be *elaia*. Greek uses *elaion* for olive oil and *elaia* for olive tree. The terms *olive*, *oleo*, *oleaginous*, *oleograph*, *oleophilic*, *oil*, and *oily* are all derived from the Greek root word for olive.¹ In Latin it was *oliuetum* for olive grove, *oleum* for olive oil, *olea* for olive tree (*Olea* is the genus of true olives in scientific Latin), and *oleaster* the subspecies or varietal name for wild olive. This last term was adopted into English.² *Oliua* in Latin became *Oliuarius* in English, meaning "of or like" olives.

De Candolle discusses early references to olives and indicates that the earliest Hebrew books mention the olive as *sait* or *seit*, both wild and cultivated.³ He suggests that the Semitic word *sait* must date from remote antiquity. It is found in modern Persian as *seitun*, in Arabic as *zeitun* or *sje-tun*, and in Turkish or among the Tartars of the Crimea as *seitun*, which may signify that it is of Turanian origin or

from the remote epoch when the Turanian and Semitic peoples intermixed.

De Candolle also states that the ancient Egyptians cultivated the olive tree, which they called *tat*.⁴ Branches or leaves of olive have been found in sarcophagi. He suggests that the Egyptian name, quite different than the Semitic, shows an awareness of olives more ancient than the earliest Egyptian dynasties. The olive apparently did not play a major role in Egyptian or Lower Mesopotamian agriculture, based on archaeological evidence, but olive oil was important from Palestine to Egypt.⁵

The Berber name for the olive, both tree and fruit, has the root *taz* or *tas*, similar to the *tat* of the ancient Egyptians. The French-Berber dictionary calls the wild olive *tazebboujt*, *testtha*, and *ou' zebbouj*, and the grafted olive *tazemourt*, *tasettha*, and *ou' zemmour*. Another Berber nation, the Touaregs, call it *tamahinet*. These are strong indications of the antiquity of the olive in Africa.⁶

The Arabs of Algiers use the term *zenboudje* for the wild olive, *zitoun* for the cultivated olive, and *zit* for olive oil. The Andalusians call the wild olive *azebuche* and the cultivated olive *aceytuno*. In other provinces, the Latin *olivio* was used together with the Arabic words. The reference to oil in Spanish is *aceite* and in Portuguese *azeite*, which are similar to the Hebrew name. However, the holy oils are called *óleos santos* because they came from Rome. The Basques used the Latin name for the olive tree, *olea*.⁷

The early etymology is reflected in present terminology as follows: French, *olive*; Spanish, *oliva*; Italian, *oliva*; Portuguese, *azeitona*; Rumanian, *maslina*; German, *Olive* or *Ölbaum*; Dutch, *olijf*; Swedish, *oliv*; Danish, *oliven*; Norwegian, *oliven*; Polish *oliwka*; Czech, *oliva*; Serbo-Croatian, *maslina*; Hungarian, *olajbogyo*; Finnish, *oliivi*;

Turkish, *zeytin*; Indonesian, *zait*; Esperanto, *olivo*; Russian, *aliva*; Greek, *elia*; Arabic, *zaytoun*; Hebrew, *sayit*; Yiddish, *olif*; Japanese, *oriibu*; Swahili, *zeituni*.⁸

Archaeological and Historical Evidences of the Domestication of the Olive

Renfrew states that “nothing could be more misleading than to attribute the emergence of Aegean civilization” to only subsistence changes.⁹ Although evidence on the beginnings of fruit horticulture is fragmentary, “examinations of plant remains in Neolithic and Bronze Age sites in the Near East and Greece . . . indicate that olives, dates, . . . grapes, figs, and pomegranates were already under cultivation in protohistoric times.”¹⁰ From the beginning of the Neolithic period (around 6000 B.C.), the plants and animals, which were to have a significant role in late Bronze Age times, were already there. Renfrew suggests that “the early neolithic was probably based upon cereals,” centering on emmer wheat. During the later neolithic much more diversity developed and there was “a deliberate collection [and] exploitation of a whole range of wild species, including the fig and grape.”¹¹ As a result of some specialized uses of these various species, the vine and olive were also domesticated.

By 7000 B.C. permanent agricultural villages were well established throughout the Near East. Grain-farming and stock raising, especially sheep and goats, were important. This pattern predominated for the next four thousand years. With the Bronze Age, horticulture was developed in the Levant to give agriculture its distinctively Mediterranean character. Some evidence indicates that by 3100 B.C., five fruits had been domesticated: olive, grape, date, fig,

and pomegranate.¹² An olive press was unearthed at Ugarit (present-day Syria) in a late third millennium context.¹³

In addition to the philological data in the foregoing section, it is evident that olives were present in Palestine by the fourth millennium B.C. based upon the presence of numerous well-preserved olive stones. Olive stones and olive wood charcoal have been found in Chalcolithic horizons (3200 B.C.) of Tell Mashosh near Beersheva and in early Bronze Age deposits (2900–2700 B.C.). Olive wood and stones are also present in Middle Bronze Age deposits, but few early finds of olive have been reported outside Palestine.¹⁴

Regarding the beginnings of olive cultivation, Kathleen Kenyon stated that it is reasonably certain that olives were cultivated in Palestine by at least the early third millennium B.C. and possibly as early as the fourth millennium.¹⁵ This conclusion was drawn from the discovery of olive and date stones stored in stone-lined silos at Teleilat Ghassul, just east of the Jordan near the Dead Sea. In his review, Boardman states, "The place and time of its first cultivation, if there was a single place and time, and its first use for the production of oil, is less clear. It has normally been assumed that this happened somewhere in the Syria-Palestine region, probably in the Early Bronze Age or Chalcolithic period."¹⁶

Neef agrees that olive cultivation probably started in the area of Northern Palestine-Southern Syria.¹⁷ He mentions that plant micro-remains from three Chalcolithic sites in the Jordan Valley indicate early olive tree cultivation and an economy largely based on the olive tree. Noy, Legge, and Higgs point out that materials were found in various levels excavated at Nahal Oren Kebaran, about 10 km south of Haifa in the Wadi Fellah.¹⁸ The materials were dated from approximately 14,000 to 16,000 B.C. The site was repeatedly

occupied over thousands of years by culture after culture. Seeds from several plants were found, including olive seeds. The authors did not indicate whether they thought they were wild or domesticated, although they most likely were wild.

Maria Hopf studied remains of cultivated plants from Arad from the Early Bronze Age.¹⁹ She stated that by this time the diet was enriched by olives. Throughout the two hundred years of settlement the olive stones were almost the same size. She suggested that the inhabitants of Arad probably did not need to plant olive trees but could utilize (and perhaps graft) trees growing locally. Judging from the slightly longer, younger stones, the assumption was made that the olive trees may subsequently have enjoyed special care and attention. The size of the stones from wild or cultivated trees originally differed very little, especially under varying conditions of growth. She stated that "only in Greece and Italy are we sure that any olive trees we meet have been nursed by man." An additional point of interest is that the evidence of Egyptian documents suggests that oil was a commodity brought from regions outside Egypt and that Egyptian jars were found in Arad. The assumption was made that Arad was one of the Canaanite centers of trade with Egypt.

In harmony with a Palestinian-Syrian origin for the beginnings of olive cultivation, Greek mythological legends suggest that the cultivated olive came into Greece from an outside source. Turrill points out that Greek myths and legends emphasize the importance of vegetative propagation as a source of beginnings for the cultivated olive in that part of the world.²⁰ Turrill adds that archaeological evidence confirms the importance of the olive in Greece only from Early Minoan times onward (circa 1300 B.C.), while evidence is

certain that the olive, *Olea europaea* L., has been cultivated in the Mediterranean basin from the days of the earliest civilizations.²¹

Not all writers have concluded, however, that the olive was first cultivated in Palestine. Renfrew assumes that the olive was domesticated in the Aegean rather than in the Levant. He states that the significance of the olive as a food must have been fully appreciated, as the Linear A and B Tablets document transfer of olive oil as well as olives, for both of which there are ideograms.²² It would be interesting to know whether the olives were used exclusively for oil, not yet pressed, or for pickling and for oil.

Suggesting that olive cultivation occurred in Greek lands in the Early Bronze Age (circa 1000 B.C.), Boardman believes that the olive was not of prime importance at that time.²³ He points out that some transitional types of olive stones from Crete, between wild and cultivated types of olives, raise the question of whether cultivation was achieved either first or perhaps independently in Crete.

The importance of the olive in the Aegean is discussed by Cotterell.²⁴ After 6000 B.C., hunting and gathering were followed by sedentary agriculture. In southern Thessaly, at its height after 4800 B.C., farmers in Sesklo planted wheat, barley, millet, peas, vetch, almonds, figs, pears, and acorns. They also took advantage of wild vines and olives growing in the region. After the third millennium B.C., there was a southward shift of population in Thessaly, and the grain and livestock farming was supplemented by the cultivation of olive and the vine. The approximately thirty years required for full productivity of the olive and its uneven yield from season to season imply ordered social conditions. The Greeks chose the olive branch as a symbol of peace, and olive oil soon became a staple commodity. Its

three chief uses were cooking, cleaning the body, and lighting. The domestication of the olive was a decisive step as it altered the pattern of land use.

In addition to archaeological evidence, as well as clues from myths and legends, historical sources suggest that olives have been cultivated from the earliest periods of Western history. Sturtevant cites evidence from several historical sources: Homer's mention of green olives in the garden of Alcinous and Laertes, brought by Cecrops, the founder of Athens; the cultivated tree distinguished from the wild by Dioscorides; the olive first being brought to Italy at the time of Pliny and carried over the Alps to Gaul and Spain; and, at the time of Cato, the Romans's acquaintance with nine kinds of olives, and later twelve kinds at the time of Pliny.²⁵

A recent popular article,²⁶ however, raises questions regarding the eastern Mediterranean Basin being the only source of the cultivated olive. The article reports on the finding of an olive pit in Southeastern Spain in a rock shelter known as *Cova de la Flaguera* in which a two-fifths inch long single olive seed, typical of domestic olives, was discovered. The seed was charred indicating that there was human intervention and it was carbon dated between 6430 and 6090 B.C. This predates the Bronze Age by more than two thousand years and puts it into the Old Stone Age with artifacts of hunter-gatherers. If it is a domesticated, rather than a wild olive, it has significant implications concerning the emergence of agriculture. The earliest other credible evidence for agriculture in Spain dates from about 5000 B.C. The presence of a single olive seed allows archaeologists to wonder whether agriculture arose indigenously in Spain, rather than being imported from the Middle East. Additional studies should help to answer this question.

Genetic Evidences of the Early History and Domestication of the Olive

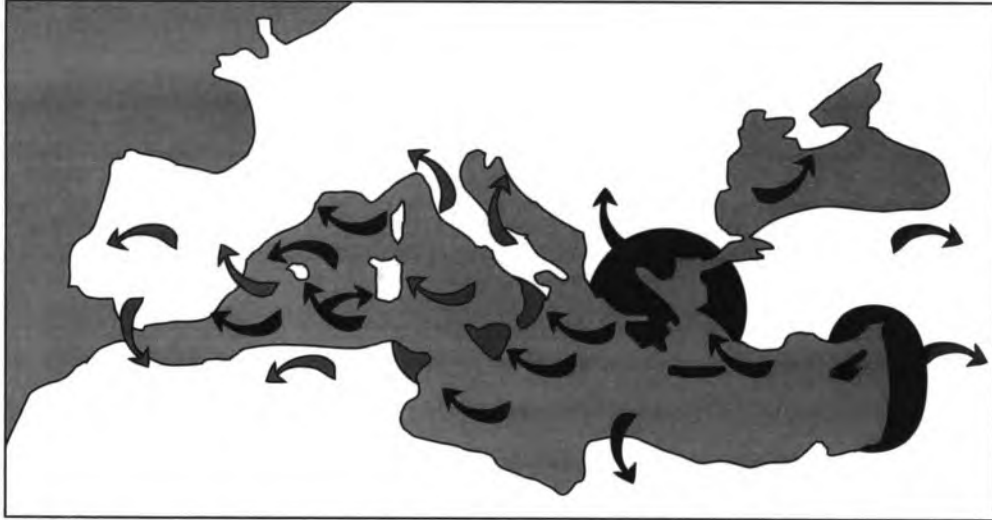
Having examined the beginnings of olive cultivation from a geographical perspective, we now turn our attention to the evidence of the cultivated olive's genetic beginnings. "*Olea europaea* is the only Mediterranean representative of the genus *Olea* L., which includes 35–40 species . . . [in] tropical and southern Africa (the main center), south Asia, . . . eastern Australia, New Caledonia and New Zealand."²⁷ Several wild species in these areas are taxonomically close to *O. europaea* and are probably interfertile, or partly interfertile, but are separated geographically from those other species. The African and south Asian wild olives are adapted to strikingly different climatic regimes. Neither wild nor domesticated forms of *O. europaea* extend beyond the Mediterranean region and reproductively they are well separated from other wild members of the genus *Olea*.²⁸

There are many theories on the genetic origins of the cultivated olive. Turrill suggests three possibilities.²⁹ The first is domestication of the cultivated olive from the *oleaster* or "wild olive" (*Olea europaea* var. *oleaster*), which has substantial genetic variability and many characteristics that are similar to the cultivated olive (*Olea europaea* L.). As part of this first possibility, Turrill suggests that *oleaster* plants were derived from cultivated plants. Cultivated plants require human care to maintain their cultivated characteristics because most saplings raised from the seeds of a cultivated plant resemble wild forms in their characteristics and are useless in terms of fruit quality.³⁰ The second possibility is that the *Olea chrysophylla*, presently grown in Madagascar and tropical Africa, may be the ancestor of the cultivated olive.³¹ Turrill's third suggestion is that *Olea laperrini*, native to the Saharan mountains, is the immediate ancestral stock

that formerly had a much wider and more continuous range than at present.³² It may have been a link between *O. chrysophylla* and *O. europaea*.

These views are not shared by the geneticist Simmonds, who refers to the olive as one of the relics of the tropical mid-Tertiary flora (fifteen to eleven million years ago) of the Mediterranean, the only member of the genus *Olea* to have survived from that age in the area.³³ He mentions that the parent species of the cultivated olive are not known but are generally inferred to have been two species, one a form with narrow leaves with a golden underside and the other which contributed to the oily pulp character, a "proto-*Olea*" of Ciferri, which became extinct. The crop probably originated as a hybrid swarm in the mountains of the eastern Mediterranean: the Taurus, Amanus, and Lebanese mountains, as far as High Galilee. The great diversity of stone types, dated to the fourth millennium B.C., also suggests a hybrid origin.³⁴ Thus, wild *oleaster*, in light of evolutionary views, must be regarded as an escaped variety rather than being truly wild, or in any sense ancestral to the cultivated forms.

On the other hand, Zohary and Spiegel-Roy suggest that the wild olive did not escape from cultivation because the *oleaster* olives occupy niches in many areas along the shores of the Mediterranean not disturbed by cultivation.³⁵ They thrive as an important constituent of garigue (low open scrubland characterized by shrubs, low trees, and bunchgrass) and the thick scrubby underbrush of maquis evergreen plant associations. They "are particularly common in the lower-latitude belt (0–300 m) along the Aegean shores, the coast of southern Turkey, and the maritime belt of Lebanon and Israel, as far south as Mount Carmel."³⁶ They are also present in northeastern Anatolia, in Cyrenaic,



The symbolism of the olive is most deeply rooted in the land of Israel. Most evidence confirms that the domestication of the olive began in the region of Syria and Palestine, then moved (as shown by the darker arrows) westward into the Aegean area, and then later (as shown by the lighter arrows) into Italy, Sicily, North Africa, and western Europe.

Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, southern Spain, southern Italy, and many other western Mediterranean countries. In these areas they grow in association with oaks, pistachios, and other trees and shrubs and are considered genuinely wild. However, they also frequently grow at the edges of fields and in abandoned terrace cultivation. Since they are used extensively as rootstock material, they frequently occur in modern times as escapees.

From the eastern Mediterranean, the olive moved westward and generated a secondary center of diversity in the Aegean area and perhaps a tertiary center farther west in southern Italy and Tunisia. In the Aegean center the plants produced large-fruited types, which occurred only as "impurities" in the Near Eastern populations. The Tunisian populations in the tertiary center were likely influenced by the local wild forms.³⁷

Although there are many species of olive,³⁸ there is only

one wild olive which is closely related to *Olea europaea*, the domesticated fruit tree grown for olive production. The wild olive, *O. oleaster*, and the domesticated forms are present in the same general geographic and climatic belt. Wild olives are distributed over the entire Mediterranean basin and have a small fruit size and low oil content. In some areas they are extensively used as rootstock material onto which cultivated varieties are grafted. Since the cultivated varieties grow in the same geographic and climatic zones, there is parallel variation in wild forms and trees under cultivation. The two forms are loosely interconnected genetically and, in many respects, comprise a single wild and cultivated species complex, which agrees with the archaeological data. Thus, based upon combined evidence, Zohary and Spiegel-Roy conclude that the East Mediterranean wild *oleaster* olives are "stock from which the cultivated olive was derived, and the Levant is the place where the olive was probably first brought into cultivation."³⁹

Since there is a tendency for domesticates to revert to a "wild" state unless they are given constant attention, and since the wild *oleaster* olives "are self-incompatible and reproduce entirely from seed,"⁴⁰ we favor the assumption that cultivated or domesticated olives are selections from wild forms. As is characteristic of cross-pollinated plants, both cultivated and wild forms of olive are extremely heterozygous. When their seeds are planted, the progeny segregate genetically, yielding very diverse progeny. Thus, as would be expected, seedlings raised from a cultivated plant resemble wild forms in their morphology and are useless in terms of fruit quality. As a result, propagation from seed is impractical in olive culture.⁴¹ In order to select and stabilize useful varieties, the grower must use clonal propagation. Saplings must be grown from desirable cuttings by vegeta-

tive rather than sexual propagation. In this way the saplings have the same genetic makeup as the tree from which they are taken.

Botanical Characteristics and Cultural Practices

Olives are evergreen trees with gray-green foliage. The flowers are produced on a cluster ("inflorescence") of about fifteen flowers, each of which arise in leaf axils of shoots produced the previous season. Most olive flowers have anthers, the male portion of the flower that produces pollen, and pistils, the female portion that produces fruit. However, the pistils may abort leaving non-fruiting trees. The olive is wind-pollinated, and trees of most cultivars set some fruit with their own pollen. Fruit set is normally heavier with cross-pollination.

The fruit is a drupe (a stone fruit such as peaches and apricots). The pericarp, stone, and seed proper all contain oil in different proportions.⁴² In some years the environmental conditions result in heavy fruit set so fruit thinning is necessary to increase the size of the fruit. Without thinning, fruit may be small, maturity is delayed, and normally the trees will not bloom the next year, resulting in alternate year bearing.⁴³ Among the oil crops, the olive is unique in that the oil is present primarily in the flesh of the fruit rather than the seed. About ninety percent of the world's olive production is for oil.⁴⁴

The *oleaster* (wild) olives have smaller fruits, and they usually have spinescent lower branches. "The fruits have a less fleshy mesocarp [middle layer of the pericarp] and contain less oil."⁴⁵ The stones are not considerably smaller than in domesticated olives,⁴⁶ which makes it difficult, if not impossible, to tell whether stones found in archaeological sites are from wild or cultivated olives. However, the pres-

ence or absence of wild olives currently growing in areas of archaeological interest is a relevant factor.⁴⁷

Cultivated olives, including the large fruited cultivars that have been examined, are almost all diploid with $2n = 46$ chromosomes. Occasional tetraploids and triploids have been reported, and one case of polysomaty ($2n = 55$) was reported. The chromosomes of related wild species apparently have not been counted.⁴⁸

Olive trees live for hundreds of years and grow in very few areas of the world. They generally require a Mediterranean climate of moderately cold winters and long, hot summers with low humidity. Olives grown for commercial production grow best between latitudes from thirty to forty-five degrees, both north and south, in areas free from severe winters. Most cultivars require at least two months of mild winter chilling, between 1.5 C (34.5 F) and 15.5 C (60 F), for flower initiation to occur. "Trees are killed to the ground by temperatures below -11 C (12 F)."⁴⁹ Olive trees grow well in a range of soil conditions from rocky hill-sides with rocky soil to deep fertile valley soils ranging from acid to alkaline conditions. They tolerate considerable salinity and boron, but do not withstand poorly drained soils. They die if water stands around the roots for a few weeks.⁵⁰

Although olive trees may live hundreds of years, the life span of permanent plantations is not as important as before. Economic and social situations, as well as consumer preferences, are changing rapidly. There is now little incentive to limit short-term productive capacity in favor of longevity even though olive groves do not attain full production until after the seventh or eighth year. This non-productive period discourages the planting of olive trees in fertile areas that can be used for other more profitable crops, including other

tree crops. Formerly, groves were planted by parents for the profit of their children.

Both in past and modern times, grove density has been as low as ten meters or more between trees, or a density of one hundred trees or less per hectare (2.47 acres). With traditional spacing, a large proportion of the ground remains uncovered and unused for many years and this increases the costs of deep-ploughing. In modern times it is not unusual for farmers to increase significantly the density of plantations. New groves with more than one thousand plants per hectare are common.⁵¹

Concerning the raising of new olive plants, most olives can be propagated very easily by one of several methods. One of the most common ways is by placing hardwood cuttings in nursery rows or by rooting young softwood cuttings in mist propagating beds. While mycorrhizae (a mutually beneficial association in which the mycelium of a fungus invades the roots of a seed plant) may be important in production of some fruits, very little emphasis has been placed upon mycorrhizae associations with olive roots.⁵²

Grafting or budding is also used to propagate olives. Although this can be done in many ways, it is common to top-work older trees to change cultivars. This is done by bark grafting, which brings cambial layers (regions of active cell division) into contact so the tissues of the stock and scion can grow together.⁵³

Another method is the use of *uovoli* (which means "little eggs" in Italian). These are called "ovules" in English and are protuberances formed in the parts of the plant where build-up of sap or slowing down of sap circulation occurs, normally at the base of the trunk. There is often hypernutrition which causes cambial cells, from which roots and stems arise, to form aerial sprouts and adventitious roots. If they

are rooted in nurseries, they can be transplanted directly or divided after roots and sprouts appear. The ovules may be left attached to the tree for propagation. This may be necessary when old trees are cut down or damaged by frost, or some other factor. The base of the tree is covered with a light layer of soil to stimulate root production.

“Strangulation” may also be used, which stimulates sucker formation. This consists of strongly binding the base of the tree with one or two turns of wire. Alternatively, a strip of bark can be cut out around the tree. The suckers which form may be taken to a nursery for further development or they can be planted directly.⁵⁴

Olive wood is extremely plastic and has great powers of regeneration. Growers in Andalusia, for example, practice another method for establishing new olive groves by using pieces of olive wood six to twelve centimeters by three meters. The pieces of wood are planted at the end of winter after pruning. Where the climate is hot and dry they are planted early to induce rooting before it becomes too hot. The buried cuttings are banked with a conical hill of soil leaving only twenty to thirty centimeters of the cutting exposed. The cuttings from thick branches almost always form new trees, which are known for being vigorous and productive.⁵⁵

Productive olive trees are also developed by combining desired rootstocks with desired branches. Most fruit and nut trees consist of the above-ground fruiting portion and the below-ground rooting portion. The two parts are often joined together by budding or grafting, normally when the plants are young in the nursery. Rootstocks are generally selected because the growers are concerned about tree size (some root stocks cause “dwarfing”), resistance to soil-borne organisms (some rootstocks make it possible to grow

plants in pest- or disease-infested soil), resistance to unfavorable soil conditions (rootstocks may be more tolerant to poorly drained, heavy, or saline soils), and resistance to low winter temperatures (cold winters may be tolerated better on some rootstocks than others).⁵⁶ These procedures were used anciently and continue to be used in modern times.⁵⁷

Once the trees are propagated by using one of the previously mentioned methods, the young trees should be pruned carefully and sparingly. Care should be taken to establish a central trunk with four or five well-spaced scaffold branches. Since mature trees bear fruit laterally on shoots produced the previous summer, moderate annual pruning is required to stimulate productive shoots. Nonproductive branches that are diseased, broken, or old, should be removed. When old trees lose vigor and production drops, heavy pruning may stimulate new growth that will recover the fruit yield.⁵⁸

Fruit and Oil

Cultivated olives are often divided into two main types: oil varieties, which contain from twenty to thirty percent oil in ripe fruits; and less oily varieties used for fruit. Table olives are harvested in the autumn when the fruits are green to straw in color. The raw olives contain a glucoside, which makes them very bitter until they are treated with a dilute alkaline solution to remove the glucoside. If olives are exposed to air during the treatment, the oxidation of phenolic compounds causes the olives to turn black. If they are kept submerged during the treatment they remain green.

A different treatment is used for Spanish-green fermented olives, primarily in the Mediterranean countries. The fruits are picked green, then subjected to a lye treat-

ment to remove the bitterness. They are then thoroughly washed and are transferred to barrels containing a salimeter brine solution where a six- to eight-month lactic acid fermentation process transforms them to a product that can be sealed in salimeter brine for storage and consumption.⁵⁹

If oil is the desired product, the fruit is left on the tree until midwinter and is normally black when harvested. The olives are then washed and ground in crushers, creating an olive paste, which is then pressed in hydraulic presses. The oil is then allowed to rise to the top, is drawn off, and is washed with warm water to remove the bitterness. Centrifugation is used to remove the water, leaving the final product a clear, golden oil.⁶⁰

Classification of the different types of cultivars used for olive production is generally based upon the characteristics of the fruit. A cultivar is a "cultivated variety," which has been given an international designation based on its clearly distinguishable characteristics. Whether reproduced sexually or asexually, a tree of a cultivated variety retains its distinguishing characteristics throughout its life.⁶¹ The cultivated olive, *O. europaea*, has a large number of cultivars, which normally have vernacular names. Several classifications have been proposed, but the classification is, as mentioned, usually based on the general shape and taste of the fruit. The fact that there is great plasticity in olive foliage makes it difficult to use foliage factors as constant characters for purposes of classification;⁶² since the fruit is the primary economic reason for olive production, fruit characteristics are usually used for classification. As is the case with most domesticated plants, the domesticated olive has great diversity of forms, which have been developed for diverse climatic and geographic niches.

"All olive-producing countries have their own local cul-

tivars, many of which have been grown for centuries."⁶³ Examples of important oil cultivars are Picual, Frantojo, Cornicabra, Chemlali, and Souri. Important table olive cultivars are Manzanillo, Sevillano, Ascolano, Conservolia, Calamata, and Galega.⁶⁴

Pathogens, Pests, and Nutrition

Olives are susceptible to an array of insect and other disease pests. In the Mediterranean countries the "olive fly" (*Dacus oleae*) and the "olive moth" (*Prays eleaellus*) are the most common insects, but they are not present in California. Another insect, "black scale" (*Saissetia oleae*) can be severe in most olive-producing countries. A bacterium (*Pseudomonas savastanoi*) causes galls that cut off the supply of sap to the ends of the branches ("apical zones"). One common fungus, "verticillium wilt" (*Verticillium spp.*), affects the roots, and another, "peacock spot" or "peacock eye" (*Cycloconium oleaginum*), can defoliate trees.⁶⁵

Other examples of olive diseases caused by fungi, which are discussed by Azpeitia, include "olive shield" caused by *Macrophoma dalmatica*.⁶⁶ This fungus primarily attacks a section of the individual fruit, but less commonly it may cause a diffuse infection over the whole olive, causing it to dry and wrinkle with a loss of fruit weight and increased acidity in the oil. More commonly it causes an isolated infected zone, which looks like an oil stain or "shield." The infected zone is depressed from one to two millimeters, making the fruit unfit for use as a table olive. Another fungal disease called "soapy olives" is caused by *Gloeosporium olivarum* and may attack the wood, leaves, and fruit, the latter being the most common target. It dehydrates the fruit, increases acidity of the oils, and causes premature fruit to fall. A fungal disease of less concern is sooty mold, caused

by *Capnodium elaeophilum*. This disease causes damage by covering the leaf and keeping out light, thus impeding the development of chlorophyll, which in turn reduces production.

Olive trees also suffer from disorders that are nonparasitic.⁶⁷ Some of the most important disorders in the Mediterranean basin are caused by (1) climatic factors, including late frosts—particularly in areas that are ecologically marginal for olive tree production, (2) excess water in the root zone, (3) lack of soil water, particularly with non-irrigated olives, and (4) sharp changes in humidity and temperature, which cause a physiological disorder resulting in dehydration of the tip of the fruit (“apical zone”) between one and three months after pollination.

In addition to controlling pests, fungi, and nonparasitic disorders, it is important to provide proper nutrition for the olive if production is to be successful. Chemical analysis of soil, analysis of leaf tissue (called “foliar diagnosis”), and systematic experimentation permitting the comparison of yields from fertilized crops with those where one or more elements have been withheld or reduced, make it possible to determine what nutrient supplements should be used to increase olive production. Proper nutrition can also help to reduce the problem of alternate year bearing.

The principal fertilizing elements for olive production are discussed by Llamas.⁶⁸ He stresses the importance of nitrogenous fertilizers, which can be applied in various forms, and points out that all organic fertilizers contain some nitrogen. In modern olive production, mineral fertilizers are more commonly found as nitrate, as ammonia, or as a mixture of the two. Nitrogen may also be supplied as urea or calcium cyanamid. Llamas also discusses the use and importance of soluble phosphates, partially soluble

phosphates, and "natural" or "rock" phosphates to supply phosphorus to plants, as well as the need for potassium fertilizers. The most common nutrients used as supplements for cultivated plants worldwide are nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium.

Organic materials play a number of important roles in olive fertilization. They provide cohesion in loose sandy soils and improve the texture of heavy soils; they help to stabilize the pH, increase the capacity of ion exchange in the soil, aid in retention of humidity, and reduce excessive runoff in hilly areas. Organic materials in the soil also activate microorganisms that aid in the assimilation of nutritive elements by the roots. For all of these reasons, organic materials are a fundamental factor in fertilizer programs.

Application of organic materials, either in the form of natural or artificial manure, should be done in the autumn and be buried as deeply as possible. In dry climates, five to ten tons per hectare should be applied every one or two years. In more humid climates the application should be every three or four years. The scarcity of manure has obliged olive growers to seek other types of organic material. Where there is sufficient rainfall for decomposition of organic material, green manuring is used. This involves burying winter legume crops in the spring as compost. This procedure can supply a great quantity of easily decomposable organic material.⁶⁹

Trace elements are also important in olive production. They consist of minerals and chemicals used in minute quantities by the plant and are important for proper plant growth and fruit production. There are ever-increasing deficiencies of trace elements because of the lack of manure, the use of increasingly purified chemical fertilizers, and the increased extraction of soil resources in intensive olive-

growing areas. For olives one of the most important trace elements that needs to be supplied is boron. Boron deficiency can be easily corrected by the application of borax to the soil or leaves. Sulphur deficiencies can be partially corrected by sulphur dusting two or three weeks before flowering.⁷⁰

Botanical Anomalies or Unusual Circumstances in Jacob 5

Nearly all of the allegory in Jacob 5 corresponds exceptionally well with both ancient and modern botanical principles and horticultural practices. It is hard to imagine that its author was not personally familiar with the minute details and practices involved in raising good olives in a Mediterranean climate. However, there appear to be three points in the allegory that may strike a modern botanist as unusual. While these anomalies or unusual circumstances are relatively minor from a scientific standpoint, they represent important metaphorical points of the allegory that were apparently necessary to portray Zenos's intended meaning. Such anomalies are often introduced in allegories, partly to remind the audience that the allegory represents a reality beyond its constituted parts and also to cause the audience to remember the extraordinary powers that impel the depicted events. As another example of a similar phenomenon, the parable of the Prodigal Son dramatically begins with the shocking circumstance of a son requesting the distribution of his inheritance while his father is still alive; the Jewish law of Jesus' day, in all likelihood, would not have permitted a son to accelerate his future interest in his father's estate.

1. Botanical aspects of the Jacob 5 allegory are briefly discussed by Hess, indicating one possible anomaly.⁷¹

“Wild” branches do not naturally yield “tame” fruit—in other words a grafted olive branch keeps its genetic constitution regardless of what type of olive tree it is grafted onto. When branches of a wild olive tree are grafted onto a tame olive tree (Jacob 5:10), we assume that this is analogous to grafting a wild species (*O. oleaster*) onto a domesticated species (*O. europaea*). If this assumption is correct we would not expect to obtain the desirable large-fruited tame olives from the small-fruited wild olive branches. The tame olives are selected for their desirable characteristics and each cell of any branch will be genetically the same as the tree from which it was cut. Thus, the grafted wild olive branch has an inferior genetic constitution for fruit size, and other characteristics, causing all of the fruit on the wild branch to be small and undesirable. Cultural practices involving proper nutrition, elimination of diseased parts, proper pruning, irrigation, and so forth, will not cause wild fruit to attain the same size and desirable characteristics as tame fruit, particularly if compared with trees or branches that are genetically tame and are properly tended. If wild trees are carefully tended, the fruit becomes larger than normal, but it would still have the same genetic characteristics of the wild species. The manner in which the servant and Lord of the vineyard speak of the olive tree in verses 16–18 implies that they were pleasantly surprised that the wild branches bore fruit “like unto the natural fruit”: “Behold, look here; behold the tree.” This result would not normally have been expected without divine assistance or extraordinary conditions.

Likewise, when the tame tree produced much fruit (Jacob 5:23) and then became corrupt (Jacob 5:39), this seems to represent a fundamental botanical change. The text states that the natural tree “had become wild” (Jacob

5:55). If this refers to a change in the actual nature of the fruit, this could only be accomplished by grafting, for one cannot obtain wild fruit from a tame tree in the natural course of events. While a domesticated tree does not become wild in the sense of changing species, the fruit set may become too light or too heavy, or pests or disease may damage the crop left unattended. With lack of care the fruit would be small and unusable like wild fruit, but it would still have the other desirable genetic characteristics for which it was originally selected and cloned. By asserting that the natural fruit became wild, the allegory emphasizes the serious and extensive nature of changes that result from corruption within the House of Israel.

2. Although it would also have been unusual for an olive grower to graft wild branches onto a tame tree, circumstances exist when it makes good sense to do so. Due to the vigor and disease resistance of certain wild species, grafting wild stock onto a tame tree can strengthen and revitalize a distressed plant (see question thirty-nine, later in this chapter.). Zenos's allegory portrays the Lord of the vineyard as somewhat exasperated, trying all available options to revive his old, beloved tree, including the extraordinary step of experimenting to see if any good might come by grafting wild stock onto the branches of the natural tree. Although doing this would have been an unconventional, perhaps even desperate measure, the Lord will spare no effort to obtain again the desired fruit from his choice plant.

3. It might also seem odd that one of the trees planted in poor soil should produce good fruit. One of the branches was planted in "a poor spot of ground . . . poorer than the first" (Jacob 5:22-23). Nevertheless, this plant thrived. Although olives sometimes do well in poor soils because of

their long maturing period and ability to tolerate considerable salinity, boron, etc., it is only with much attention to cultural practices that productive trees will grow on poor soil. When all of the important cultural factors are carefully optimized, olive trees will grow and produce a crop on poor soil. Accordingly, the unusual poorness of the soil in this part of the allegory draws attention to the extraordinary care and power of the Lord of the vineyard. The production of good fruit by the plant under these circumstances is attributable exclusively to the fact that the Lord had "nourished it this long time" (Jacob 5:23).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The foregoing general principles apply to specific elements in Zenos's allegory of the olive tree as follows:

Olives in General

1. What is a "tame olive tree" (Jacob 5:3)?

The term "tame" is synonymous with cultivated, "natural," domesticated, and "good." As indicated by Pansiot and Rebour, "The first agricultural peoples selected the best of [the] wild varieties and from these initial selections and many subsequent ones, . . . present varieties [(cultivars) were] derived."⁷² Only one species, *Olea europaea* L., commonly called the European Olive, is used for fruit and oil production today. Jacob 5:3 sketches the typical lifespan of such a tree: it was taken and planted and nourished, it grew, waxed old, and began to decay.

2. What is a "wild olive tree" (Jacob 5:7, 9, 10, 17, 18, 34, 46)?

The term "wild" is synonymous with bad, nondomesticated, and weed. Although there are many species of wild olive, the "wild" or nondomesticated subspecies *Olea*

europaea oleaster is the one normally referred to as wild in the olive-growing areas around the Mediterranean. It is derived from seed and differs greatly from plant to plant, displaying markedly varying characteristics. However, it generally has thorns and small leaves and produces small drupes (fruits). Some *oleasters* are large trees and some are only of moderate size. The small tree types can be used as rootstocks to dwarf cultivated olive trees, which is important today since increased planting density is now common.⁷³

Several types of both cultivated and wild olives are classified under the designation *O. europaea sativa*. The wild forms are found in natural olive groves and have characteristics much like cultivated varieties. It has been suggested that these wild trees come from seeds "of cultivated varieties disseminated by birds."⁷⁴ Seedlings raised from any mother tree segregate genetically, manifesting variation for numerous traits including size, shape, and palatability of the fruits.

3. How do "tame" olive trees revert to having "wild" characteristics (Jacob 5:46)?

In Zenos's allegory, the tame tree is twice portrayed as changing to produce bad fruit or as becoming wild: "It hath brought forth much fruit, and there is none of it which is good. And behold there are all kinds of bad fruit" (Jacob 5:32); "the fruit of the natural branches had become corrupt" (Jacob 5:39); "they took from the natural tree which had become wild" (Jacob 5:55); "they also took of the natural trees which had become wild" (Jacob 5:56). In saying that the natural tree became wild, it appears that the allegory may have reference only to a change in the quality of the tree's fruit and not its genetic composition, since it is not likely that anyone in Zenos's day understood the necessary principles of genetics that remained undiscovered until the

latter part of the nineteenth century. As discussed earlier, a specific “tame” tree will not genetically change to a “wild” tree. However, a tame tree can produce inferior (bad or wild-like) fruit and will revert to manifesting wild characteristics if it is not properly cultivated.

In order to maintain production, maximize fruit size, and maintain the health of cultivated or domesticated trees, it is necessary to attend to proper pruning, adequate nutrition, thinning, and when necessary, controlling pathogens and pests. When this is done, the fruit quality and size is maximized. However, if domesticated trees are neglected, there is a tendency for the fruit quality and production to be inferior and, as is stated by Hillhouse: “Fruit trees and flowers lose in reproduction, the properties which they had acquired by culture, and tend anew to the state of nature.”⁷⁵ One of the characteristics of domesticated plants is that if they are properly cared for the size and quality of the fruit will be significantly better than on either wild or unattended domesticated trees.

Accordingly, the main factor mentioned in the allegory as the cause of fruit loss was cultural rather than genetic, leading to the withering of good branches. Good branches were grafted onto trees in the nethermost part of the vineyard (Jacob 5:8), but the wild parts of those trees eventually overran them, “even that the [grafted natural] branch had withered away and died” (Jacob 5:40; see also Jacob 5:43), “because I plucked not the [wild] branches thereof and cast them into the fire” (Jacob 5:45).

Domesticated trees have been genetically selected to produce well under a grower’s carefully applied cultural practices. If both “tame” and “wild” trees receive the same cultural attention by growers, the “tame” or domesticated tree will, almost without exception, yield fruit of superior

quality and size. On the other hand, if the same trees, both "tame" and "wild," are left without attention, the "wild" is more likely to survive, even though the fruit will be genetically inferior.

Cultivated trees, with the desired genetic characteristics, must be propagated vegetatively, as opposed to propagation by seed, to maintain the superior genetic constitution. In this way all of the offspring from a clone will genetically be the same. Thus, all of the plants in a grove can be genetically identical, which can cause pollination problems because of potential genetic self-incompatibility. However, if seeds from these plants are used to propagate seedlings, the new plants may be of the wild type, as is pointed out by Bioletti and Colby,⁷⁶ Renfrew,⁷⁷ and Hillhouse.⁷⁸ With seed production, the chromosomes of two plants combine, causing segregation of the genetic characteristics resulting in genetic diversity. Because of this genetic diversity, if the seeds produced on one tree during one season were all grown, rarely would one of the new plants have all the desirable characteristics of the "mother" plant.

4. How do "wild" trees bring forth fruit "like unto the natural fruit" (Jacob 5:17)?

Similarly, a wild olive graft does not genetically become tame. Each cell of any branch will remain genetically the same as the parent tree from which it was cut. Cultural practices involving increased nutrition, proper pruning, irrigation, and so forth, will not cause wild fruit to attain the same size and desirable characteristics as tame fruit, but some improvement might be shown.

On one occasion Zenos states that the wild branches began to produce good fruit. But the Lord of the vineyard attributes this solely to the strength of the roots, not to any constitutional change: "Behold, the branches of the wild

tree have taken hold of the moisture of the root thereof, that the root thereof hath brought forth much strength; and because of the much strength of the root thereof, the wild branches have brought forth tame fruit" (Jacob 5:18). Later the Lord will remember that because of the strength of the roots, "they have hitherto brought forth, from the wild branches, good fruit" (Jacob 5:36). Not only do the servant and Lord of the vineyard seem somewhat surprised that the wild branches have borne fruit that is "like unto the natural fruit" (Jacob 5:17), but this singular event did not last long. In time the wild branches completely overran the roots and the tree became worthless (Jacob 5:37).

Locations

5. How adaptable are olive trees to different locations and environments?

Zenos depicts olive branches being moved to various parts of the vineyard; yet conditions must not vary too widely for the olive to thrive. The olive is best adapted to the Mediterranean climate with warm, wet winters and hot, dry summers. Although winter chilling is required,⁷⁹ olives will not tolerate an average temperature below 1.3°C (34°F) for the coldest winter month. They will grow up to 550 meters above sea level, with some cultivars capable of existing up to 600 meters. Olives thrive best on "calcareous schistose sandy or even rocky soils, in well-drained situations."⁸⁰ Warren states that "the cultivated olive is the only tree to maintain a high growth rate on arid south aspects," where as a young tree it grows several millimeters in thickness annually and produces a crop at the same time.⁸¹

Most olive cultivars grow best in localized areas and there is risk in planting a specific cultivar outside its cultivation zone. There are many instances of good local culti-

vars “which have never been successful outside their own microclimate.”⁸² Accordingly, the Nephites may have realized more acutely by Zenos’s allegory the risks inherent in their travel to a distant land. However, there are some cultivars, called international varieties or cultivars, with a known adaptability to many environments. These cultivars are the best choice when it comes to adjusting to new environmental conditions.⁸³

6. How many trees make up a vineyard (grove)?

Plant densities vary from about seventeen to one thousand trees per hectare (2.47 acres).⁸⁴ Anciently it was common to plant well-spaced trees so there would be sufficient room for trees to grow large. Planting was intended for the next generation because nearly forty years were required for trees to mature. Now trees are brought into production more quickly and growers do not maintain plantations in production for as long. Better cultivars are developed in fewer years, consumer preference changes frequently, and there are modern methods to bring plantations into production much more quickly than in ancient times.

7. Do olives need to be in a vineyard for pollination or other ecological reasons?

Some varieties of olive are self-incompatible (self-sterile) to a greater or lesser degree, so compatible pollinators are normally used. Since the pollen is wind-borne, about ten percent of the trees need to be pollinators. If growers do not have knowledge about the potential for self-incompatibility in a cultivar, it is wise to plant two or three cultivars together.⁸⁵ There are also mutations in some cultivars of olive, which cause the breakdown of self-incompatibility resulting in cultivars which are self-pollinating.⁸⁶ Although Zenos focuses his attention on the main tree in the vineyard,

the Lord is clearly interested in the productivity of all his "trees" (Jacob 5:60, 74).

8. Regarding the "nethermost" part of the vineyard (Jacob 5:13, 14, 19, 38, 39, 52), do olives grow better or worse at lower locations?

"Nethermost" today refers to lower, furthest down, or inferior. Verse 14 says the Lord of the vineyard "hid the natural branches of the tame olive-tree in the nethermost parts of the vineyard, some in one and some in another," knowing that in some cases this was "a poor spot of ground" (Jacob 5:22). Olive trees do not prefer either very low or very elevated situations, but rather they are best adapted to gentle declivities.⁸⁷ In some orchards, lower elevations receive more moisture, but if the choicest place was originally selected for the main tree in Jacob 5 higher up in the orchard, then places lower in elevation would be less desirable.

Soils

9. Do olives produce well on poor spots of ground (Jacob 5:21–23)?

Because of its underground root system, olives can obtain water and nutrients in poor soils that receive little rainfall, provided the physical properties of the soil meet certain minimum standards and that the volume of soil is sufficient for each tree.⁸⁸ The olive needs sufficient, but not too much, water and is otherwise not particularly affected by soil variations. It is a "rich plant for poor soils," provided adequate nutrients are supplied. Even exceptionally poor soils can be used for the olive, but the lower the nutrient supply in the soil, the greater the volume of soil necessary. On poor soil, wide spacing is essential. The poorness of the site must be compensated by intensive cultural technique,

as is reflected in Jacob 5:22–23. Negligence of the least detail may jeopardize the trees. Olives need a light, well-drained soil and will not grow well on heavy or poorly drained soils.⁸⁹ They prefer loose, calcareous, fertile land mingled with stones.⁹⁰

10. What does it take to make olive trees thrive when planted in poor quality soil (Jacob 5:20–23)?

Several factors are necessary for an olive tree to produce well, including sufficient water, proper drainage, availability of nutrients for the roots, sufficient tith to add nutrients, careful attention to pruning, and favorable concentration of salts in the soil. Bioletti and Colby state that it is a mistake to suppose that olives will yield profitable crops in poor soils.⁹¹ Poor soils must be well fertilized to insure good growth of young trees and good crops with old trees. Pansiot and Rebour state that “at times prosperous groves can be established under difficult conditions because the olive has no equal as a tree in its ability to thrive on poor sites.”⁹² In such cases, the poorness of the site must be compensated by intensive cultural management.

11. How does one select a site to start a new olive tree (Jacob 5:13)?

Zenos mentions briefly the fact that the Lord prepared a good spot of ground for the last branch that was planted in the nethermost part of the vineyard: “And thou beheldest that I also cut down that which cumbered this spot of ground, that I might plant this tree in the stead thereof” (Jacob 5:44). Pansiot and Rebour discuss factors that are important today when setting new plantations.⁹³ They include (1) research into and propagation of cultivars, marking of parent trees and grafting on seedling olives, (2) careful choice of planting sites determined by a study of conditions, (3) erosion control, particularly with contour

planting, (4) planting density, as determined by availability of water and nutrients, (5) careful preparation of the site by plowing or subsoiling, except in sandy soils, and (6) tree shaping to give trees a low form.

Before planting an olive grove, the local technical, economic, financial, and social conditions must be carefully studied. It will take six years to obtain a crop after the trees are planted, and they will not be in full production for about forty years. A map of the plantation must be made, especially if irrigation is used. It should show the contours before and after leveling, tree sites, roads, irrigation channels, sluices, and so forth. For at least six years there will be no income, so a planting contract should be made between the landlord and the tenant.⁹⁴

Roots

12. What characteristics indicate “that the roots are good” (Jacob 5:36)?

At first, the Lord of the vineyard appears unsure of the cause of decay in his beloved olive tree. He grafts wild branches into the tame rootstock hoping to revitalize it, and he grafts tame shoots onto other trees in case the tame root dies (Jacob 5:7–8). After seeing how the wild grafts flourish, he knows that the roots of his beloved tree are good (Jacob 5:36) and thus resolves to keep trying, eventually deciding to clear out the wild branches that had been grafted in and to graft back in the original stock from the trees in the nethermost parts of the vineyard (Jacob 5:52).

Good root structure is vital to the productivity of the olive and a valuable resource to be preserved and cared for (Jacob 5:11, 59). Up to the third or fourth year, olive roots grow vertically downward, after which these original roots are replaced by another underground root system devel-

oped from nodules, which form on the base of the trunk just below the soil surface. The nature of the roots can be judged in part by the soil, which helps to determine the manner of root growth. Heavy, poorly aerated soil causes a network of fine roots to form near the surface. Sandy soils are easy for roots to penetrate, so the root system becomes much more extensive.⁹⁵ One can also know whether the roots are good by the age of the tree and by examining the other vital signs such as leaf size, fruit set, and fruit size.

Care and Fertilizing

13. Can olives be productive without day-to-day attention? Can they be left on their own with only infrequent care?

Zenos depicts the Lord of the vineyard typically going away for a season and returning after a relatively long time (Jacob 5:15, 29). While it is important to give olive trees consistent care, they do not require constant attention. Pansiot and Rebour call olive the Cinderella of agriculture because it only needs care in the off-season when other crop work is finished.⁹⁶ Warren states that "in comparison [to] cereal production, only a modest and seasonal amount of time and manpower" is needed for cultivation.⁹⁷ The olive tree is called "the queen of trees" by White because it requires the least expense for cultivation.⁹⁸ The olive requires only a little seasonal attention, and it can be cultivated in areas where cereals and pulses will not grow.⁹⁹ If properly managed, olive groves only need to be worked twice or three times in the winter and usually "one (occasionally two)" cultivations in the summer, in addition to the usual pruning and fertilizing.¹⁰⁰ However, seasonal pruning is time consuming and is a very important component in maintaining a productive olive grove.

14. Do olive groves represent a long-term commitment of time and money?

The Lord of the vineyard often remarks: "It grieveth me that I should lose this tree" (Jacob 5:7, 11, 13, 32, 46, 47, 51, 66), and he weeps at the thought of losing his tree (Jacob 5:41). Zenos represents the tree as a precious commodity and a substantial asset. It takes about two years to grow and graft scions to rootstocks, and the plants remain in the nursery for another three to four years. After the trees are planted it will take at least six years to start production and about forty years for it to come into full production.¹⁰¹ White states that "a tree of such slow growth represents a heavy investment of time and labor."¹⁰²

To rejuvenate a tree may also take several years. Since fruit is only borne on second-year shoots, it is important to insure that there is ample second-year growth for fruit each year. When trees grow old and are neglected, the amount and kind of effort is very important to bring the trees back into production. This may necessitate grafting wild, more vigorous, branches on to the old tree, then later grafting on branches from productive cultivars to obtain good fruit (see question 39, later in this chapter). The roots and top must be balanced (see questions 21, 22, and 35). If trees are neglected too long, it may be more practical to burn them and start a new plantation from suckers from the roots of the burned trees (see questions 30 and 56). If this last resort is used the trees may not be lost, unless they had been grafted onto wild rootstocks, which would bring forth wild growth when they regenerate.

15. What kinds of steps must be taken in the general care of an olive grove?

As is true for domesticated crop plants in general, olive trees require consistent seasonal attention in order to ensure

good fruit production. The quality of the yield stands in direct relation to proper intelligent care, and thus the Lord speaks of "all the care we have taken of my vineyard" (Jacob 5:46). Most domesticated plants have been selected to produce more and better products when they are properly tended. If they are not tended, the products they produce may even be inferior to wild types or they may not produce at all, with the domesticated plants not even surviving. Domesticated plants such as maize, wheat, and potato will not survive in nature without human assistance. Even some domesticated weeds, selected unintentionally, which grow best in association with the domesticated plants, fail to grow outside cultivated fields. Olive trees are not excepted from this rule. They require specific kinds of attention, although olive culture is not as intensive as for many other domesticated crops. Without proper care they will cease to produce, whereas with proper care they will produce for a very long period of time.

Scaramuzzi discusses important points relative to care for olive groves: (1) the choice of a good natural site is important, (2) grafts should be carefully chosen and scion wood should be only from healthy trees, (3) plants from nurseries should be carefully inspected to ensure that they are pest-free, (4) trees should be well spaced in plantations, (5) balanced fertilizer should be applied at regular intervals, (6) trees should be correctly pruned to eliminate weak branches and to let in light and air, (7) soil should be cultivated frequently to destroy weeds, which are often alternate hosts of pests, and to help with penetration of nutrients into root zones, (8) when rainfall is insufficient, groves should be irrigated at the proper time and in proper amounts, (9) a watch should be kept for the first signs of pest infestation, which allows early local treatment, (10) the cultivated grove

should be well-aerated to reduce pest problems and to aid in weed control, and (11) simple and inexpensive preventive treatments such as liming trunks or coating wounds are also important.¹⁰³

16. How is an olive tree “nourished” (Jacob 5:3, 4, 11, 12)?

As is mentioned often in Jacob 5, fertilizing an olive tree is essential to good productivity. The amount of fertilizer used should be determined for each case based upon soil, climate, situation of the tree, tree age, cultivar, growth, and other factors. Fertilizer additions also need to be modified with the changes in the vegetative and nutritional state of the tree.¹⁰⁴ Pansiot and Rebour point out that although there are many factors, typical annual soil fertility amendments for olive trees per hectare (2.47 acres) is from seventeen to thirty-three kilograms of nitrogen, from eight to twenty kilograms of phosphoric acid, and from twenty to fifty kilograms of potash and lime.¹⁰⁵ They suggested that the fertilizer should be spread over the entire surface and then uniformly incorporated into the soil. When planting in holes, 2.5 to 3 kilograms of superphosphate and 0.5 to 0.8 kilograms of potassium sulfate per tree is normally sufficient. The upper soil layers trap phosphates and potash, which makes it difficult to make these nutrients available to the feeder roots once the plantation is established.¹⁰⁶ Ground breaking (“digging about”) makes it possible to place these fertilizers in the zone of root activity.

17. Why and how should olive trees be “dug about” (Jacob 5:4, 5, 11, 27, 47, 63, 64)?

In simple terms, it is necessary to loosen the soil to make nutrients and moisture available to the roots. Because the upper layers of soil tend to tie up phosphates and potash, they often do not reach the feeder roots unless the soil is

disturbed. Deep plowing of the whole area may be advisable in most cases. Light or sandy soils will not benefit from plowing because they are naturally well aerated and nutrients easily penetrate them. As clay content increases the need for deep plowing does as well. Shallow working of the soil by plowing and harrowing also has advantages. It forms an insulating layer, which prevents evaporation of water, increases permeability of the soil, kills weeds, and aerates the soil, increasing nitrification and root development.¹⁰⁷ Sometimes two plowings or more a year are advised: one in the summer to "prevent the ground from cracking and exposing the roots to the sun, and the other in mid-autumn, forming ditches from the higher to the lower slopes."¹⁰⁸

18. What is meant by "dunging" the trees (Jacob 5:47, 64, 76)?

Anciently, commercial fertilizers were not available, and it is likely that most farm units had farm animals. Not only did the dung build up, necessitating removal, but the benefits of application to crop plants were significant. It is still common throughout the world to apply dung to improve crop production, in spite of the extensive use of commercial fertilizers.

"When trees can be supplied with about 50 kilograms of well-rotted farmyard manure growth can be considerably advanced."¹⁰⁹ Organic manures are applied in the autumn so they can "decompose during the winter and make nutrients available . . . to sustain the spring flush."¹¹⁰ The manure must be incorporated into the soil as deeply as possible without damaging the roots.¹¹¹

The olive yard should be manured at least once every three or four years, but it is more beneficial to manure moderately every year. Excessive manure can impair the quality

of the fruit. Vegetable substances are preferable to animal manures for fruit trees in general, especially for the olive and the vine. When animal manure is used it should be tempered with other nonmanure organic material such as seaweed or leaves and applied when the whole is reduced to mold.¹¹²

Pruning

19. Do branches shoot forth naturally after pruning (Jacob 5:4), and how and why are olive trees pruned (Jacob 5:4, 27, 58, 62, 64, 69)?

All of the fruit of the olive is borne on second-year wood and the same wood does not bear again. For this reason a new crop of shoots each year is necessary for fruit set.¹¹³ With proper management, trees can be stimulated to produce young shoots. Zenos refers repeatedly to the process of pruning to stimulate fruit bearing.

In order to obtain fruit production each year, an olive grower must prune annually. There are a number of pruning procedures, which include lowering, reduction, crowning, pollarding, cutting back, and undercutting.¹¹⁴ Growers must carefully calculate the amount of wood to remove, requiring the pruner to be expert at his work. In extensive olive-growing areas, where labor-intensive methods cannot be applied, another type of pruning is often used. The olive tree is set up on a permanent trunk, which is maintained as low as possible. The principal branches of different ages are preserved only for a short period of production and then are suppressed in favor of younger branches. This allows production to be regulated and limits the volume of the crown. This method of pruning is much less expensive, although pathogens are more likely to enter cuts where large branches are removed.¹¹⁵ All of these pruning methods

concentrate on making young and tender branches shoot forth so there is second-year wood for fruit production.

On older trees, the grower must pay attention to the leaf-wood relationship. Aged trees have few useful leaves and few shoots large enough to bear fruit but have lots of wood. The leaf-wood relationship, therefore, is an important index relative to the productivity of the olive tree. Rejuvenating operations usually involve improved cultivation, nitrogenous fertilization, and achieving proper leaf-wood ratios, but these procedures have to be accompanied by good pruning for high production of fruit.¹¹⁶

"Bad pruning is the most important factor in tree aging, whereas proper pruning is the best corrective [measure]."¹¹⁷ If olive trees develop naturally, they pass through an early shrub-like period. Later they develop into tree form, according to the conditions of the soil and climate. With time, biennial bearing begins and the trunk becomes thicker and irregular. Some sections of the bark become necrotic (old and diseased), and strips of live bark maintain the connection between the active roots and the active parts of the crown. These are common symptoms of aging. The interior of the trunk eventually rots, which causes further decrease in production. This usually takes place within seventy to eighty years.

If most or all of the aerial part of the tree is eliminated by pruning, leaving only the trunk, a circle of sprouts will form a short distance from the trunk. After a year these sprouts are thinned out leaving only those that will remain permanently. Obtaining a new tree from a sprout takes from three to eight years. The reconstruction of an olive grove by such pruning is an ancient practice, according to Elant.¹¹⁸ Cutting back is an expensive operation, and it involves intensive hand labor.

20. What happens when the top has “overrun the roots” (Jacob 5:37, 48)?

One of the problems confronted by the Lord of the vineyard was the fact that the branches overcame the roots by growing “faster than the strength of the roots, taking strength unto themselves” (Jacob 5:48). There is a distinction between mineral uptake by roots, particularly the influence of nitrogen compounds, which are necessary for wood growth, and carbon assimilation by photosynthesis, which takes place in the leaves and supplies carbon for the forming of the plant body, including the fruit. In order to get a full crop of olives an equilibrium must be maintained between these two processes. However, the relation between photosynthesis and underground nutrient absorption depends largely upon the age of the tree. As trees age it becomes more difficult for the roots to continue to grow and obtain nourishment for the tree, while the foliage is still very active. The equilibrium is broken when mineral substances from the roots become less available. When this happens rejuvenation pruning is necessary to reduce the aerial portions of the tree.¹¹⁹ Accordingly, when the older rootstock of the main tree in Jacob 5 is rejuvenated by extensive grafting, it cannot keep up with the vigorous new growth of the wild stock (Jacob 5:37), and pruning and grafting are necessary as a corrective measure.

21. How does a change in the branches affect the roots; “because of the change of the branches, that the good may overcome the evil” (Jacob 5:59)?

Rootstocks have a direct bearing on the quality of the fruit. Temperate fruit tree growers “often select a certain rootstock for a particular fruiting cultivar because it will dwarf the tree” to facilitate fruit harvesting and, in most instances, will bring the tree into production sooner. The tree

is dwarfed, but not the roots nor the fruit. Hartmann *et al.* point out that for "some species, particularly citrus, the type of rootstock can . . . influence the quality of fruit produced by the scion cultivar. . . . When sweet orange seedlings are used as the rootstock for orange trees, the fruits will be of much higher quality than when 'Rough' lemon is used."¹²⁰

The reasons for these rootstock influences are not known. Possibly certain dwarfing rootstocks produce relatively large amounts of growth inhibitors, such as abscisic acid which is translocated through the graft union to the fruiting scion.¹²¹ There is little information on similar grafting effects for olives. It is known that some olive varieties benefit from grafting onto a compatible rootstock. An example of a beneficial graft is "Gordal" grafted on "Zorzaleigne" in the Seville region. In dry cultivation the Gordal is not sufficiently vigorous on its own roots to produce large table olives, while with the Zorzaleigne rootstock it is.¹²² Control of tree size and sometimes changes in tree shape may be significant rootstock effects, as well as influencing the vigor of certain scion cultivars.¹²³

Hartmann, Kofranek, Rubatzky, and Flocker also point out that if a strongly growing scion cultivar is grafted on a weak rootstock, the growth of the rootstock will be stimulated and will become larger than if left ungrafted.¹²⁴ If a weakly growing scion cultivar is grafted on a vigorous rootstock, the growth of the rootstock will be lessened compared to what it might have been without grafting. With the olive, the productivity of each scion-rootstock combination must be tested individually. The vigor of one cultivar or variety on a particular rootstock may not be duplicated by another scion variety.¹²⁵

22. Why it is necessary "that the root and top . . . be equal in strength" (Jacob 5:66, 73)?

It is necessary to achieve and maintain a proper balance between the roots and branches of the olive tree. Due to various climate and soil conditions, the one may grow more vigorously than the other. Pruning does not necessarily stop excessive growth when trees are young and may even aggravate the imbalance between the above- and below-ground portions of the tree. When trees are young with inadequate foliage, pruning should be minimized. As trees get older more severe pruning becomes necessary because of the now diminished root activity.¹²⁶

23. As the grafts grow, why would one prune away the branches with bitter fruit "according to the strength of the good and the size thereof" (Jacob 5:65)?

As suggested in Jacob 5:11, the wild branches were grafted in to save the roots, probably because the wild branches had more vigor than tame branches. If this assumption is correct, wild branches could have been grafted from many wild plants (see "all kinds of bad fruit," Jacob 5:32). Some branches would produce fruit more bitter than others, depending upon the genetic constitution of the individual wild plants, particularly since wild plants reproduce from seeds that will result in significant genetic diversity. The most bitter fruit would be the least desirable to retain; thus, it would be eliminated first to replace the wild branches with tame branches. However, all of the wild branches would be replaced only as there was sufficient vigor in the tame branches to support the roots, precisely as is depicted in Jacob 5:65–66.

24. If you clear out the bad too quickly, what happens when the root becomes "too strong for the graft" (Jacob 5:65)?

In Jacob 5:65 it is stated, "And ye shall not clear away the bad thereof all at once, lest the roots thereof should be too strong for the graft, and the graft thereof shall perish, and I

lose the trees of my vineyard." If all of the branches were replaced at the same time, the tree and roots could be overstressed. Perhaps the "roots being too strong for the graft" refers to excess water and minerals being made available at the deficit of photosynthetic products, because the newly grafted branches would not have enough foliage to photosynthesize and translocate carbon compounds to the roots.

25. What procedure is implied by the term "pluck-off" (Jacob 5:7, 26, 52, 57, 58)?

To pluck means to pick out, cull or strip,¹²⁷ cut or remove. Zenos reflects a difference in the severity of pruning: ranging from "plucking off" whole branches or sections (Jacob 5:7) to "trimming up" selected growth (Jacob 5:58). White states that after several years trees should be pruned and all unwanted branches should be lopped: "Remember the old proverb 'He who ploughs the olive-grove, asks it for fruit; he who manures it, begs for fruit; he who lops it, forces it to give fruit.'"¹²⁸

26. What is wrong with "loftiness" (Jacob 5:48)?

In Jacob 5:48 the servant diagnosed the problem with the master's tree: "Is it not the loftiness of thy vineyard?" It appears that loftiness refers to the branches overcoming the roots. The tree is too tall and there is too much foliage for the roots to feed (see question 20, discussed earlier.) This is a common problem with olive trees. Pansiot and Rebour state, "In the course of time, the tree can grow to a considerable size. If left to itself, it can attain a height of 15 to 20 meters, but then, of course, picking the crop becomes very difficult."¹²⁹ These authors also state that a tree should not grow so tall that the trunk is exposed to the sun.¹³⁰

27. How are pruning teams organized (Jacob 5:61, 70-72), and is it typical that the "laborers are few" (Jacob 5:70)?

In order to accomplish the necessary pruning, the Lord

instructed the servant to “go to, and call servants” (Jacob 5:61). The servant organized a small pruning team (Jacob 5:70), and the Lord encouraged them to work hard (Jacob 5:71). They then went to work, taking instructions from the Lord and working together with him (Jacob 5:72).

Pansiot and Rebour discuss pruning teams in modern groves.¹³¹ They are normally composed of from eight to twelve apprentices with a very competent foreman (as compared to the servant). The most competent specialist cuts back the large branches and works with the conservation of the replacement branches. The less skilled worker might thin the small fruiting branches, as this is easier. Adolescents trim and cover the wounds with grafting wax. Children bring supplies and equipment. Even when experienced pruners are used proper organization of the work teams is important, and each worker must be given appropriate instructions.

The foreman gives the directions for the overall tasks to be performed. At the foot of each tree he tells the workmen the pruning plan. He discusses places where thinning should be thorough and where it should be lighter, the main branches that need to be eliminated, and if necessary, he uses chalk to mark spots where main cuts will be made. He supervises the work and checks it when completed. The branches are left on the ground where they fall so their former positions on the trees are clear in the event that discussions about them are necessary.¹³² It is significant that the Lord of the vineyard himself works the vineyard at first (Jacob 5:5, 15, 29) and works alongside his servant-foreman and his hired hands as the season draws near (Jacob 5:72).

The point that only a few laborers were engaged by the Lord of the vineyard (Jacob 5:70) appears to be necessary for the message of the allegory, but it is also relevant to olive culture. A fairly small crew of pruners and workers can

maintain a vineyard or plantation (see question 13, earlier in this chapter.)

28. How were hired workers usually paid?

In the ancient world, where cash currency was not always available, wages for workers hired for the season would have been paid by giving them part of the harvest, but in more developed economies, wages and exchange equivalences were fixed by law. For example, in Babylonia wages could be paid to harvesters, winnowers, and hired hands in set amounts of either barley or silver.¹³³ The importance of the olive is suggested by palace accounts of Mycenaean princes who made meticulous entries indicating rations of oil awarded to staff. In ancient Israel “there was little demand or market for hired labour. The hireling in most cases was a poor foreigner lacking a plot of land of his own.”¹³⁴ In Zenos’s allegory, labor seems to be organized at first by the day (Jacob 5:47) and then for the final season (Jacob 5:70–77). Labor contracts could be made by the day (Deuteronomy 24:15), possibly by the harvest season (Ruth 2:3), or by the year (Leviticus 25:50, 53; Isaiah 16:14; 21:16). It was a mark of great generosity for a master to furnish his workers, in the end, not just with money but “liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy [threshing] floor, and out of thy winepress” (Deuteronomy 15:14). Therefore, in Zenos’s allegory, when the Lord of the vineyard promised his workers a share of the crop, he should probably be understood as being very generous (Jacob 5:72).

Transplanting and Asexual Propagation

29. How can olive branches be “planted” (Jacob 5:23, 24, 25, 54)?

One of the key elements of the allegory of Zenos is the image of taking cuttings from the tame tree and not just

grafting them into other trees (Jacob 5:8–9) but clearing the ground (Jacob 5:44) and “planting” them elsewhere (Jacob 5:23, 24, 25, 54). These branches will take root (Jacob 5:54).

The ancients relied principally upon propagation by slips, which is accomplished by taking stem pieces or cuttings of roots and burying them in an inclined position in trenches four inches deep. They normally sprout within a year.¹³⁵ The olive is one of the few fruit trees that can be propagated by taking a branch of a tree and burying it in the ground. This is apparently what Zenos had in mind when he indicates that the Lord of the vineyard took branches and “planted” them, saying that the natural branches were “hid” in the ground (Jacob 5:14). Hillhouse states that the olive is extremely tenacious.¹³⁶ When the trunk has perished by frost or by fire it forms new sprouts. If a bit of the bark, with a thin layer of wood, is buried in the earth, it becomes a perfect plant. All of the branches and even the trunk can be removed and the tree may still live (see question 19). Olive shoots can be cut off, placed in soil, and indeed they will root.

30. What is meant by “young and tender branches” (Jacob 5:8)? Does this refer to suckers? Do they bear fruit? Can they be grafted elsewhere or transplanted?

Regarding the young and tender branches, they appear to be new growth that resulted from the heavy pruning mentioned in Jacob 5:4, 7. Suckers are “shoots arising from the underground parts of the plant, usually coming from adventitious buds on roots. In grafted trees they generally arise from the rootstock below the graft union.”¹³⁷ If suckers arise from the rootstock, they should be removed as soon as they are noticed, since the rootstock’s genetic constitution is rarely suitable for fruit production. Rootstocks normally originate from seeds of cultivated varieties or from wild

varieties, which creates the genetic diversity and the resulting unsuitability for fruit bearing. Unlike scions used for fruit production, rootstocks are not typically propagated vegetatively. However, in California, a cloned rootstock is frequently used because of its resistance to the fungus *Verticillium Albo-atrum*.¹³⁸

Vigorously growing above-ground branches are also called suckers. This normally happens when trees have been overpruned. If above-ground suckers alone are used as the shoots to produce new trees it may take ten years or longer for them to bear fruit.¹³⁹ Elant states that when suckers are removed from a main trunk, "obtaining a new tree may take up to eight years, but three or four years are often sufficient."¹⁴⁰ He does not indicate whether obtaining a new tree also implies fruit production. Accordingly, if the Lord of the vineyard used suckers, it is appropriate that the allegory mentions that he allowed "a long time" for them to grow (Jacob 5:15).

Such shoots can be transplanted. Ovules, protuberances at the base of trees, may form aerial sprouts that can be rooted or grafted. The ovules can be induced to produce rooted suckers *in situ*, which is their natural function, by covering the base of the tree with a light layer of soil.¹⁴¹

Aging

31. What happens when an olive tree "waxes old" (Jacob 5:3)?

As olive trees age, the roundness of the trunk is lost and ridges form on the surface, separated by hollows. Even though the old wood is very hard, it may deteriorate, especially in rainy areas. It then becomes difficult for the roots to continue proper growth and to supply nutrients to the tree. At the same time, the foliage may be very active and

the equilibrium is broken as a result of the falloff in the supply of mineral substances by the roots. Growth slows down and cannot keep pace with fruit production. Pruning is then necessary to rejuvenate the tree by reducing the aerial portions of the tree, thereby maintaining a proper balance between the top and the root.¹⁴²

There is a tendency for olive trees to form more fruit than they can maintain with the available nutrients. As trees age this tendency becomes accentuated. If the excessive fruit is not thinned, fruiting the following year will be considerably reduced, or even non-existent.¹⁴³

32. What is the "main top" (Jacob 5:6)?

The term "main top" is not commonly used in modern terminology. In the context of Jacob 5:6, it appears to refer to the "main branches" (Jacob 5:7) of the original tree, which were replaced because of the age of the tree or neglect. Pansiot and Rebour state that "the sap flows most readily to the best-lit portions of the tree, which are generally the branches at the top."¹⁴⁴ The lower boughs are more shaded and tend to become weakened. The main branches, with the greatest access to the light and sap, are the most important to the tree and should have the best chance for becoming productive, but when they become old and unproductive they need to be removed.

33. How can old trees be rejuvenated?

There are many ways to rejuvenate old trees, and thus the Lord of the vineyard would have many options in trying to preserve his beloved tree. Olive trees have extraordinary vitality and powers for recuperation. Old trees that are apparently dying, if properly tended, can become vigorous, high-yielding, renewed trees with only elementary care (cf. Jacob 5:8). When the lower portion of a tree has some vitality left, only the diseased, decayed, or dead portions are

removed (see Jacob 5:7). New growth starts again at varying speeds. In favorable circumstances, new shoots form a new framework within a few years and trees will resume normal fruiting after four to five years.¹⁴⁵ After a certain point, however, rejuvenation is impractical or impossible and the tree dies. Hence, the Lord of the vineyard recognizes that the end is at hand when he goes into the orchard to prune and harvest for the last time (Jacob 5:75).

34. What occurs when a tree first “begins to decay” (Jacob 5:3)?

Biological systems go through a natural aging process. When multicellular living organisms are young, the genetic mechanism dictates development and growth. With maturity there is a shift to a maintenance of cells. Human cells in culture appear to divide about fifty times, then the entire population dies. If frozen for a period of years and then allowed to divide again, the clock is reset, and they divide fifty more times before they die.¹⁴⁶ Although the specific causes are not known, aging is a common occurrence in biological organisms. Most species of trees grow to a certain size, then age and die. However, many trees may be propagated vegetatively. New shoots and suckers can reinitiate the cycle of growth. This principle is used to rejuvenate old olive trees.

From a biological point of view, “decay” (Jacob 5:3) can refer to natural deterioration, which may or may not involve microorganisms. It can also refer to decomposition caused by parasitic or saprophytic microorganisms and macroorganisms. When tree trunks are young they are normally covered completely by living tissue, which produces resins and other products that help to deter microorganisms and insects. As trees get older the bark splits, exposing underlying non-living wood that is no longer protected by

the living cells. Microorganisms, insects, and natural weathering cause decay, which in some instances may spread to the living tissues.

35. Is it natural, as a tree ages, for the branches to grow faster than the roots and “overcome the roots” (Jacob 5:48)?

“As a tree grows old, it becomes [more] difficult for the roots to continue their growth and provide minerals for the tree.” The foliage normally remains active, causing root stress. This eventually results in slowed root growth and less abundant fruit production. Rejuvenation by pruning, which reduces the aerial portions of the tree, is used to correct this situation.¹⁴⁷ Dealing with this very problem, the Lord of the vineyard determines, “We will nourish again the trees of the vineyard, and we will trim up the branches thereof; and we will pluck from the trees those branches which are ripened” (Jacob 5:58).

36. What does it mean when “branches are ripened” (Jacob 5:37, 58)?

As the Lord of the vineyard inspects his tree, he observes that “it beginneth to perish; and it will soon become ripened” (Jacob 5:37). When branches become excessively long or bent over, they lose their vitality. Stress causes the sap to seek the nearest outlet, usually causing the branches to fade and vigorous suckers to grow at the base of the branches. When the suckers occur at the base of the scaffold branches, it indicates that the branches are dying and rejuvenation pruning is necessary.¹⁴⁸ Also, wood that has born fruit once will not bear again and may be considered as “ripened.”

37. Can olive groves be reclaimed through grafting?

Zenos presents the image of an entire orchard that has become useless. The Lord of the vineyard tries to rejuvenate his whole orchard by grafting genetic material from his best

tree onto the rootstock of other trees (Jacob 5:8) and by planting shoots from that tree in various new parts of his vineyard (Jacob 5:14). Indeed, vast wild olive groves have sometimes been improved by such grafting and are found throughout the Mediterranean Basin. It is a complicated and costly process and normally calls for soil improvement.¹⁴⁹ Grafting more desirable branches onto native stands of wild olive rootstocks has given some good results, but it is currently less practical than setting out new plantations. Cultivating wild olive trees may save a few years in bringing trees into bearing, but the trees will not bear as well later.¹⁵⁰ Accordingly, the Lord of the vineyard obtains positive results at first (Jacob 5:20–24), but in time all the trees in his orchard became poor producers (Jacob 5:39, 46).

38. What is a “mother tree” (Jacob 5:54, 60)?

“Mother tree” is not a common term today, but it is sometimes used. It appears four times, late, in Zeno’s allegory. The term usually refers to a tree with desirable genetic characteristics from which cuttings are derived to produce asexually propagated offspring.

Grafting

39. How does grafting preserve the roots (Jacob 5:10, 11, 17, 34)?

The main strategy used by the Lord of the vineyard to preserve the rootstock of the main tree was to graft in branches from a wild olive (Jacob 5:9, 17). “And the servant said unto his master: Behold, because thou didst graft in the branches of the wild olive-tree they have nourished the roots, that they are alive and they have not perished” (Jacob 5:34).

Although it would be unusual to graft branches of wild olive onto tame trees to save the roots, there may be



Grafts growing on old stump. Grafting is one of the main techniques used in cultivating olives. Grafting slips from a wild olive may help resuscitate a tree that has borne badly, stimulating the rootstock and providing vigorous foliage growth. Clearly, the author of Jacob 5 was intimately familiar with the botanical characteristics of olive trees and the requirements to make them productive.

instances where the wild branches are more vigorous than tame or domesticated branches and would therefore be beneficial. White suggests that slips from the wild olive may help to resuscitate a tree that bore badly.¹⁵¹ Possibly they could supply carbon products from photosynthesis more rapidly to support the roots, because of their vigor. Without carbon compounds produced in the aboveground portion, roots will perish. If a strongly growing scion cultivar is grafted on a weak rootstock, the growth of the rootstock will be stimulated and become larger than if it were left ungrafted.¹⁵²

One other possibility is that the foliage from the mother tree had become infected with insect, virus, fungal, bacterial, or other parasites, and the "wild" shoots were used because they were resistant to the disease-causing organisms. This possibility is enhanced by the fact that Jacob 5:9 says the old branches were to be "cast into the fire," a procedure that makes sense especially if the branches were infested.

40. What is meant by "natural branches" as distinguished from grafted branches?

The natural branches are assumed to be the branches that were originally propagated by cuttings from the mother tree. Our assumption is that "natural branches" refers to branches of *O. europaea* as opposed to branches of *O. oleaster* or wild olives. Natural branches may be grafted branches as it is a common practice to graft *O. europaea* branches onto *O. oleaster*. White states that fruit farmers have learned by experience that a grafted branch will give fruit true to type.¹⁵³

41. What is the success rate of grafting?

The Lord of the vineyard expresses some doubt whether certain grafts will grow: "If it be so that these last grafts

shall grow" (Jacob 5:64). With temperate fruits, grafts are highly compatible if the two partners are different cultivars or clones within a species. There are few cases where graft combinations are successful with different genera in the same family. "If the two graft partners are in the same genus but different species, then the chances of success are greatly improved," although many of these types of graft combinations will not unite successfully.¹⁵⁴ Wild and domesticated olives are in the same genus, and they graft readily. There are many factors that determine whether grafts are successful. Examples include grafting during the proper season, the care taken to make the graft, the compatibility of the cultivar used for the scion with the particular root stock, the age of the tissue, and whether disease organisms hamper the graft. Bioletti and Colby state that a certain portion of the olive grafted scions will not grow even with the best of care, and many will remain dormant from one to two years.¹⁵⁵

Accordingly, the Lord's strategy optimized the success rate of the grafts, for he determined to graft the natural material from the nethermost parts of the vineyard back into its natural mother trunk (Jacob 5:52, 60, 67). At the same time he took additional material from that tame tree and grafted it onto "the roots of the natural branches" that had previously come from the same tree and had grown in the nethermost parts of the vineyard. The later step was taken "that I may preserve them also [the roots in the nethermost parts of the vineyard] for mine own purpose" (Jacob 5:54; see also 5:68).

42. Why is it worth working to preserve the natural branches by grafting them onto other trees (Jacob 5:13–14)?

While rootstock is important, it does not determine the quality of fruit. The natural branches from the "tame tree"



Grafts growing on old trunk. Wild and domesticated olives graft readily. In Jacob 5, the Lord's strategy optimized the chances for success when he grafted the natural material from the nethermost part of the vineyard back into its mother trunk, thereby guaranteeing the compatibility of the grafted cultivar and the host trunk.

represent a desirable clone or cultivar. Therefore, it had the genetic constitution for the desirable or domesticated fruit rather than the "wild" tree with undesirable fruit. If we have a clone or cultivar that produces good fruit, has disease resistance, is adapted to the local environment, and that grows well, we strive to preserve that clone or cultivar so we do not lose the precious genetic material. This would be true for olive or other temperate fruit trees.

43. What condition is described by the phrase "all sorts of fruit did cumber the tree" (Jacob 5:30)? Does this suggest poor fruit quality (Jacob 5:32)? Are olives especially vulnerable to this problem?

In Jacob 5:30 the natural branches are described as having been broken off and wild branches grafted in. Because of this "all sorts of fruit did cumber the tree" and "there is none of it which is good" (Jacob 5:32). This could happen if the rootstock of an old tree was rejuvenated with grafts from wild trees. If the wild branches were taken from many wild trees there would be much genetic diversity resulting in a tree that would bring forth all sorts of undesirable fruit. As mentioned earlier, when the fruit set is heavy, thinning is necessary to increase the size of the fruit so maturity will not be delayed, resulting in alternate year bearing.¹⁵⁶

In addition, olive trees tend to produce more fruit than they can supply with available nutrients. This becomes accentuated with age.¹⁵⁷ Wild olives often produce five or six fruits on each peduncle; however, cultivated trees have flowers that abort, casting green fruit during each growth stage and resulting in only one or two fruits in a cluster at maturity.¹⁵⁸ This causes wild fruit or fruit on untended trees to be thicker, smaller, and more bitter than cultivated fruit. This is another way a tree could be cumbered. Proper pruning can help to reduce this problem.¹⁵⁹

44. Why should the Lord take the liberty to graft or plant young shoots “whithersoever [he] will” (Jacob 5:8)?

As has been discussed (see questions 19, 29, 30), the olive is very easy to propagate as long as basic cultural practices are adhered to. Pansiot and Rebour report that “rooting is usually easy, except for some varieties which are not easily propagated by cuttings.”¹⁶⁰ By planting or grafting the natural branches into various parts of the vineyard, the Lord may be experimenting to see how these branches grow at different elevations, in various fresh soils, or with different amounts of moisture.

45. In what sense is “grafting a wild branch” onto a good tree “contrary to nature” (Romans 11:24)?

There are many references to the olive in the Old and New Testaments. In Romans 11:24 it is stated that it is contrary to nature to graft a wild olive tree onto a good olive tree. As discussed previously, the wild olive is related to the domesticated olive and they are both present in more or less the same geographic and climatic belt.¹⁶¹ Cultivated and wild olives are interfertile and are closely related morphologically.¹⁶² Therefore, it is relatively easy to graft wild onto domesticated and domesticated onto wild. In Romans 11:24 perhaps it is contrary to nature because we normally graft domesticated onto wild so we can use the desirable genetic characteristics of the wild root, such as vigor, disease resistance, and drought resistance in the rootstock, to enhance the genetically determined fruit of the good cultivars. We would not normally want to graft wild onto domesticated. In normal situations there would be no advantage. On the other hand, White states that strenuous efforts are sometimes made to resuscitate a tree that bore badly, including inserting slips from the wild olive along with fertilizing with urine, liming, and grafting.¹⁶³

46. What is involved when the Lord plucks out the most bitter and grafts the natural branches back into the mother tree (Jacob 5:56–57)?

Jacob 5:56 says, “And they also took of the natural trees [branches that had been planted] which had become wild, and grafted [them back] into their mother tree.” Natural trees do not change genetically to “become wild” (see questions 3 and 4). In the instance of Jacob 5:57, the wild branches are not plucked from the tree except those that are the most bitter. The only reason for grafting wild branches on tame trees is that they may provide more vigor for rejuvenation than tame branches. However, there are good reasons to remove the branches with the most bitter fruit (see questions 23 and 50).

47. Do grafted branches have a long-term future (as implied by Romans 11:25) or must they eventually all be pruned out (as in Jacob 5:73)?

In Jacob 5:73 “the natural branches began to grow and thrive exceedingly; and the wild branches began to be plucked off and to be cast away.” This presumes that all the wild branches are eventually removed from the tame tree. The viability of a graft, however, does not depend on its fruit-bearing characteristics.

If the tame tree originated from a graft of a scion onto a rootstock, all of the aboveground portion of the tree would be from a grafted branch. That tree can produce fruit from the original scion as long as it is properly pruned. If the tree is neglected and becomes old with a lot of old wood it may be necessary to graft again, particularly if it is burned or killed by frost. The new suckers that would form would be from the wild rootstock and would produce undesirable fruit. However, new grafts could be made onto them from

tame trees. Thus, for any graft, the eventuality of being pruned out would depend upon the care of the tree.

In Romans 11:24–25, Israel is the natural branch to be grafted into their own olive tree when “the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.” Thus, botanically speaking, there either could be a long-term future or branches could eventually be all pruned out.

48. How long does it take for a graft to produce fruit (Jacob 5:15)?

The length of time required for a graft to produce fruit depends upon which of the many grafting procedures available is used and numerous other factors. Grafts may be made with branches from cultivated plants onto young plants grown from wild or cultivated stones (seeds), or grafts may be made onto small or large branches of mature trees or onto ovules. There are many other types of grafts as well. Other important factors involve significant genetic diversity with rootstocks and scions, weather conditions, and the proper season for the type of graft.

In Italy, particularly in the Pescia and Foggia area where the nursery industry is very important, the “feather” graft is most often used. Feather grafting involves introduction of the graft beneath the bark of a rootstock from which the crown has been removed. The graft is made high or low on rootstocks, which may be large or small depending upon the geographic area. For example, in North Africa this graft is used most commonly on large rootstocks. It takes the plants a full season to reach a height of thirty to seventy centimeters and the diameter of a pencil before they are grafted. The five-to-six centimeter scions are taken from the central portion of one-year-old shoots. After about two weeks the leaves of the scion fall at the least touch. This is an indication that the graft has taken. When the two shoots

from the graft grow to about twenty centimeters the weaker shoot is eliminated and the other is attached to a support after several additional weeks. In March or April of the following year, when the grafted plants have reached a height of fifty to one hundred centimeters, they are moved to nursery beds and are planted in rows.¹⁶⁴

During the two or three years that the plants remain in the nursery, they are pruned to give them the proper form. Opinions vary concerning how long they should remain in the nursery before being planted in groves. Some horticulturalists believe that the higher value of plants, from three to four years old, more than offsets a shorter non-productive period. Some maintain that younger plants recover more quickly from the trauma of transplanting. Dryness, humidity, plantation size, and other factors may also be significant. Planting with a ball of soil surrounding the roots normally gives better results than planting with bare roots, particularly in dry climates.

The length of time it takes for the trees to begin fruit production after being planted in a grove also varies, depending upon a number of genetic and environmental factors. Therefore, many factors influence how long it takes for a graft to produce fruit. Pansiot and Rebour state that after the trees are planted it will take at least six years to start production with a new plantation¹⁶⁵ and about forty years for it to come into full production.

49. How does fruit behave on a graft (Jacob 5:17–18)?

The difference between fruit on a two-year-old graft and fruit on a normal two-year branch is related to the genetic constitution of the graft. If the graft is from a selected domesticated cultivar it will have essentially the same characteristic flavor, size, disease resistance, drought resistance, and so forth, or lack thereof, that the "mother tree" had. On

the other hand, if the graft is from a wild plant with small and bitter fruit, the graft will also have small bitter fruit. All fruits are borne on two-year-old wood. Also, the graft must be of sufficient size and age to produce fruit.

Grafted branches will yield fruit true to type.¹⁶⁶ Therefore, in our estimation, wild branches would normally not bring forth tame fruit. It may be possible to obtain fruit that resembles the wild type on a tame tree if the tree is not properly thinned, watered, fertilized, and pruned. However, the tame branch still has the genetics potential to produce good fruit. It does not revert to the wild type genetically.

50. Can one tree bring forth both good and bad fruit (Jacob 5:25) or all sorts of fruit (Jacob 5:30) at the same time?

Grafting can be used to change the variety of fruit a plant produces. As an example, several kinds of apple stocks can be grafted onto the same rootstock so the same tree bears several kinds of apples. An important point is that grafting cannot be used to create new kinds of fruit or flowers, even when the scion and stock belong to different species. If a Bartlett pear scion is grafted onto a quince stock the tree will produce Bartlett pears. Bringing forth good, bad, and all sorts of fruit on one tree would require grafting; it would not happen naturally. Thus, it is not surprising that the tame tree with its wild grafts would produce all kinds of fruits (Jacob 5:30), but the branch planted in the nethermost part of the vineyard would not naturally bring forth good fruit on some branches and bad fruit on others, unless someone had come in and grafted wild material onto that scion. Perhaps this is why the Lord of the vineyard asks, "Who is it that has corrupted my vineyard?" (Jacob 5:47).

Fruit

51. What was olive fruit used for?

There appears to be good evidence that the olive was important very early all around the ancient Mediterranean. The fruit of olive can be used either for pickling (eating) or for oil. It was very valuable in the life and economy of the ancient world, and thus was "most precious above all other fruit" (Jacob 5:61, 74).

Not only was the oil used for lamps, anointing, and food, but it was also used in rituals accompanying death, on the skin to prevent windburn, and as a cosmetic.¹⁶⁷ In Classical Greece, athletes and others rubbed oil on their bodies then scraped off the mixed oil, dirt, and sweat with a scraper. It is possible that the olive was used for oil before it was used for fruit, since the fruit is naturally bitter and it may have taken longer to discover how to rid the fruit of its bitterness. The ancients would have easily noticed the olive's potential as an oil source, for when ripe, the fruits make oily spots on the ground and anything else they contact. Also, oil and oil containers have been discovered in the archaeological record, leaving little doubt that olive oil was used very early. The oil probably could have been used for lamps without removing the bitter glucosides.

Although it is obvious that oil was important very early, it is also likely that the value of the fruit as food was discovered shortly thereafter. Renfrew states that in prehistoric times in Europe, olives certainly were eaten as well as used for oil.¹⁶⁸ He mentions that we can only speculate that oil was used for cooking, but it was almost certainly used as fuel for lamps. Zohary and Hopf indicate that since the Bronze Age, many Mediterranean peoples cultivated the olive for oil, eating, cooking, ointment, and lighting.¹⁶⁹ It was also a principal article of commerce primarily because

of its excellent storage qualities. Perhaps more archaeological investigations will help to further elucidate this question.

The oil is by far the most important income product. It is greatly prized throughout the Mediterranean Basin both for fine flavor and cooking properties. Pickled olives come in two types, green and black, with the green having the highest demand. Black olives are more nutritious but less commonly eaten. There are also by-products of importance. The press cake is used for manure or fuel, the wood is used by cabinet makers, and the leaves can be used as cattle feed and for pharmaceutical purposes. The stones are now also of interest and are used for molded products, plastics, and furfural makers.¹⁷⁰ Anciently, the olive was probably used much as it is used today: for cooking, oil for lamps, anointing, cosmetics, and for eating. Likely, washing that removed most of the bitter glucosides from the oil eventually led to ways for removal of the glucoside from the fruits.

52. What is meant by "laying up fruit against the season" (Jacob 5:13, 19, 20, 27, 29, 31, 46, 71, 76)? What are the characteristics of good fruit, and how is the fruit or oil stored?

Evidence for the storage of oil and wine in the ancient Mediterranean is abundant, according to Renfrew, although it is not always easy to determine whether it was wine or oil that was stored. "The magazines of Quartier XI at Mallia . . . showed a carefully planned device to avoid wasting liquid."¹⁷¹ Each of six bays in a storage vault had a bench on both sides for standing jars, with drainage furrows running transversely to the two central channels that emptied into a jar sunk into the floor.

Wace briefly discusses a similar storage space at Mycenae in the so-called "House of the Oil Merchant,"

thought to be a palace annex.¹⁷² One room contained eleven large pithoi with an oval collection pit in the center of the floor. Thirty large stirrup jars were found, and the clay of many of them was clearly impregnated with oil. Many of the jars had been stopped with clay and sealed. It is believed that this building was concerned largely with the storage and handling of olive oil, suggesting that it was a common item in their culture

The Philistines (1200–700 B.C.) had an extensive olive industry in Ekron, on the coastal plain of Canaan.¹⁷³ Although archaeologists have only excavated about three percent of the site, they have identified 105 olive installations. They expect the number of known olive installations to increase dramatically with additional excavations. With the 105 installations already discovered they estimated that the Ekron Philistines produced 1000 tons of oil annually. The 290,000 gallons would have required 48,000 storage jars each year. This output equals one-fifth of Israel's current export production.

53. What makes some olive fruit bitter (Jacob 5:52)?

Olives as picked from the tree are very bitter. Accordingly, the Lord tasted the fruit of his trees and found that they all were bitter (Jacob 5:31–32). They cannot be eaten because of a bitter glucoside in the raw fruits called oleuropein.¹⁷⁴ The glucoside can be partially washed out with running water. Repeated applications of alkaline solutions followed by water can be used to remove the remaining glucoside.¹⁷⁵ Because of genetic diversity there are distinct differences in bitterness. Cultivated olives are selected for their desirable characteristics, which include lack of bitterness, size, flavor, oil content, adaptation to the local area, and disease resistance. Bioletti and Colby point out that if "olives are gathered too green the oil will be bitter, if too

ripe it will be rancid."¹⁷⁶ Spanish green olives cured in lye may not be treated long enough to remove all of the glucoside, which may contribute to the characteristic flavor.

A recent Consumer Reports article indicates that different brands of olive oil varied widely in olive flavor intensity, from decidedly pronounced to barely perceptible.¹⁷⁷ Other flavors found in the oil were "green"—the flavor of slightly unripe fruit; "fruity"—a complex of ripened fruit flavors sometimes undifferentiated and sometimes reminiscent of melon, peach, or green-to-ripe banana; and "evergreen/herbal"—a flavor like fresh herbal with a pine-like character. Some extra virgin oils and pure oils exhibited a slight bitterness or astringency. Others produced a sensation called throatburn, which was a slight tingling or burning impression in the back of the throat. Therefore, not only do olives vary in the amount of bitter glucosides present in fruits but other flavor components are also important.

Achieving uniformity in the crop is obviously desirable, since a small percentage of very bitter fruit mixed in with the rest would reduce the quality of oil for the entire batch. Hence, the Lord of the vineyard strived to achieve a situation in which all the trees "became like unto one body; and the fruits were equal" (Jacob 5:74). Once this condition was achieved, the crop was stabilized "for a long time" of fruitful harvesting (Jacob 5:76).

Destroying Old Olive Trees

54. When the fruit becomes "corrupted," the whole tree is declared to be "good for nothing" (Jacob 5:42, 46). Are there no other uses for such a tree?

The word "corrupted" is not a botanical term. One can interpret the term to mean generally unsound. If this is correct it likely means that the branches were literally of no

more use. In verse 40, “the branch hath withered away and died” and verse 43 refers to a tree “whose branch had withered away.” This suggests that the branches were no longer functional. The life had gone out of them or perhaps they were decayed. If the wood is dead the best option may be for them to be “hewn down and cast into the fire” (Jacob 5:42). Dead wood is also likely to have parasites and pathogens, and one of the best ways to reduce the inoculum potential is to burn the infested plant materials. Olive wood contains resin and oil, so it burns quite readily.

If the wood was not decayed, it could be used for a variety of purposes. It is heavy, compact, fine-grained, and has many other desirable characteristics for wood products. Cabinetmakers use it to inlay. The ancients used it as a hard and durable wood, such as ebony and cedar. It was used for the hinges of doors because of its hardness, and the Greeks selected it for the images of their gods.¹⁷⁸

55. Why is it necessary to burn the bad wood (Jacob 5:7, 9, 37, 42, 47, 58)?

Burning is important in order to eliminate parasites and pathogens. Disease-causing organisms could be present in the branches that were removed, necessitating the need to burn them to prevent additional infection. Thus, the ground is not cumbered (Jacob 5:9). There is no direct evidence in Zenos’s allegory of plant pathogens being the cause for removal of the branches. However, it is still common today to burn infected material from trees and debris under those trees to reduce the reinfection potential of pathogens and parasites. In addition, if branches are heaped on the ground, weeds grow in the debris, and the ground cannot be ploughed, cultivated, or fertilized. Olive wood burns well before or after it is dried because of its resins and oleaginous nature.¹⁷⁹

56. Why is it advantageous to incinerate an entire old vineyard (Jacob 5:49, 77)?

It has been known since ancient times that olive groves destroyed by fire sprout vigorously. The Lord appears ready to burn his entire vineyard and start over in verse 49, but the servant persuades him to work with the existing trees a little longer (Jacob 5:50).

Groves are sometimes burned deliberately to reconstitute them.¹⁸⁰ When reconstituting an olive tree by burning, the tree is taken up, leaving only the large roots. The bases are either burned or ripped up with a tractor. The new shoots are vigorous, but they do not grow in the same spot as the original tree, which complicates cultivation. Three of the main shoots are selected about a meter from each other. They are trimmed leaving three small-rooted bases, which are covered with soil. In today's practice, the hole left by the base of the old tree is filled with fifty kilograms of manure and two units each of phosphate and potassium, mixed with soil. The trunks remain one meter apart, which makes it possible to get from two hundred to three hundred trees per hectare in what was a grove with one hundred trees per hectare before it was burned.

Thus, burning an olive grove is a symbol of rebirth. The Lord's efforts throughout the allegory represent the last effort, leading to the "last time" that he will graft and plant as he does to rejuvenate the old tree in his vineyard (Jacob 5:62–64, 71, 75–77), but the image of burning in the end is not one of destruction. It conveys botanically the idea of starting over. It reminds us that the Lord had preserved the roots of the young shoots planted in the nethermost parts for an unstated future purpose (Jacob 5:54). After the vineyard is burned, the old stump will be removed and the

young roots will shoot forth new growth carrying forth the favorable genetic material of the beloved tame tree.

CONCLUSION AND PERSPECTIVES

Based on the botanical and horticultural information present in the archaeological and historical record, and reflected in Jacob 5, we can conclude that the ancients were superb horticulturalists and had a profound understanding of vital biological and plant cultural principles. Most of the botanical and horticultural principles in Jacob 5 are sound and are very important for olive culture. In addition, the one or two points, according to our interpretation, that represent unusual or anomalous circumstances are necessary enhancements to the message of the allegory.

In this single chapter of the Book of Mormon there are many detailed horticultural practices and procedures that were not likely known by an untrained person, and may not have been fully appreciated by professional botanists or horticulturalists at the time the Book of Mormon was translated. Even today, outside of olive-growing areas, professional horticulturalists may not fully appreciate some of the unique aspects of olive culture. Given the extensive detail about olive culture present in Jacob 5, we must give Zenos much credit for a high degree of horticultural knowledge, which many take for granted.

Examples of what the ancients and Zenos evidently knew were how to prune, dig about, dung, and nourish; how to graft tame to wild and wild to tame, and how to graft tame back into tame; how to balance tops and roots by pruning, and the reasons for doing this; how to save the roots of trees whose branches had decayed, and how to transplant branches to preserve the desired traits of good plants; how to preserve and store fruit and how to distin-

guish between good and bad fruit; how well plants grow on good and bad soil; how to care for trees to cause young and tender branches to shoot forth; that they could graft wild to tame to rejuvenate tame; that specific cultivars produced well only in certain areas; how to remove the bitter glucosides from the fruit; that they could burn an orchard to reestablish a new one; that plants grown from seeds would not have desirable characteristics; the importance of elimination of old wood and debris by burning, and how to deal with pests and pathogens; how to prevent heavy bearing one year and no bearing the next by proper pruning; the necessity to plant more than one cultivar for pollination; and how to propagate scions with the desirable genetic material.

Interestingly, much of this sophisticated technology was probably lost in Nephite civilization, for the olive is not mentioned again in the Book of Mormon after Jacob 5, an indication that the lands of the Book of Mormon may not have been suitable for growing olives. It seems reasonable to conjecture that given the importance of olives, Lehi and his group might have carried olives with them as they did other plants (1 Nephi 8:1; 16:11; 18:6). However, these references mention seeds, but not cuttings, and fruit-bearing olives are not usually grown from seeds. Warren reported that the strongest, heaviest bearing, and longest living trees are those grown from seed.¹⁸¹ But trees from seedlings tend to resemble wild forms, and the resultant fruit is normally unsuited for either oil or pickling. To have the desired quality of fruit, the tree must be cloned from a selected and proven cultivar.¹⁸² Moreover, with the very restrictive climatic requirements for olive production it is not surprising that there is no New World mention of olives in the Book of Mormon. The only regions on the American continents with

Mediterranean climates where olive culture is economically feasible are the regions of California, Chile, and Argentina.

Joseph Smith probably knew how to prune, dig about, dung, and nourish local fruit trees; he probably knew a little about grafting, and he may have been familiar with some other horticultural principles, but not likely those peculiarly related to olive culture. In the Gerard *Herbal*, published in 1633,¹⁸³ there is a brief description of the olive tree, and some limited information about its characteristics and its “vertues” (virtues). In that description it is stated, “[t]he tame or manured olive tree groweth high and great with many branches, full of long narrow leaves not much unlike the leaves of willowes, but narrower and smaller: the floures be white and very small, growing upon clusters or bunches: the fruit is long and round, wherein is an hard stone: from which fruit is pressed that liquor which we call oyle olive. The wilde olive is like unto the tame or garden olive tree, saving that the leaves are something smaller: among which sometimes do grow many prickely thornes: the fruit hereof is lesser than the former, and moe in number, which do seldome come to maturitie or ripenes in somuch that the oile which is made of those berries continueth ever green, and is called Oile Omphacine, or oile of unripe olives.” From *Jahn’s Biblical Archaeology*, the following limited information (and certain misinformation) from and about the Bible could have been general knowledge in Joseph Smith’s day: “Olive trees . . . were a very ancient and profitable object of agriculture. . . . Olives in Palestine are of the best growth and afford the best oil; hence this region is often extolled on account of this tree, and especially in opposition to Egypt, which is destitute of good olives. . . . Land that is barren, sandy, dry and mountainous, is favourable to the production of the olive. . . . It flourishes

about two hundred years, and even while it is living, young olives spring up around it which occupy its place when dead. . . . It was customary, notwithstanding, to raise the tree from suckers, which were transplanted. It requires no other cultivation than digging the ground and pruning the branches. . . . The *cotinus* and the *oleaster* are both called wild Olive-trees. They are nevertheless of different kinds, though they are sometimes confounded by the Greeks *themselves*. The fruit of the *cotinus* is used for no other purpose than colouring; the oleaster, *the agrippa elaeagnus of Linnaeus*, is that species of wild olive, whose branches (see Schulz, in Paulus' collection of Travels, VI.290) are grafted into barren olive-trees, that are in a state of cultivation, in order that fruitfulness may be produced, comp. Rom. 11:17, 24."¹⁸⁴ Not much more than this was known about olives in the eastern United States (an area not suitable for olive cultivation) in 1829 when the Book of Mormon was translated. Most of the information discussed in this chapter, however, was known and practiced in the lands around the Mediterranean from ancient times to the present.

Notes

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Jacob 5

1 Behold, my brethren, do ye not remember to have read the words of the prophet Zenos, which he spake unto the house of Israel, saying:

2 Hearken, O ye house of Israel, and hear the words of me, a prophet of the Lord.

3 For behold, thus saith the Lord, I will liken thee, O house of Israel, like unto a tame olive-tree, which a man took and nourished in his vineyard; and it grew, and waxed old, and began to decay.

4 And it came to pass that the master of the vineyard went forth, and he saw that his olive-tree began to decay; and he said: I will prune it, and dig about it, and nourish it, that perhaps it may shoot forth young and tender branches, and it perish not.

5 And it came to pass that he pruned it, and digged about it, and nourished it according to his word.

6 And it came to pass that after many days it began to put forth somewhat a little, young and tender branches; but behold, the main top thereof began to perish.

7 And it came to pass that the master of the vineyard saw it, and he said unto his servant: It grieveth

me that I should lose this tree; wherefore, go and pluck the branches from a wild olive-tree, and bring them hither unto me; and we will pluck off those main branches which are beginning to wither away, and we will cast them into the fire that they may be burned.

8 And behold, saith the Lord of the vineyard, I take away many of these young and tender branches, and I will graft them whithersoever I will; and it mattereth not that if it so be that the root of this tree will perish, I may preserve the fruit thereof unto myself; wherefore, I will take these young and tender branches, and I will graft them whithersoever I will.

9 Take thou the branches of the wild olive-tree, and graft them in, in the stead thereof; and these which I have plucked off I will cast into the fire and burn them, that they may not cumber the ground of my vineyard.

10 And it came to pass that the servant of the Lord of the vineyard did according to the word of the Lord of the vineyard, and grafted in the branches of the wild olive-tree.

11 And the Lord of the vineyard caused that it should be digged about, and pruned, and nourished, saying unto his servant: It grieveth me that I should lose this tree; wherefore, that perhaps I might preserve the roots thereof that they perish not, that I might preserve them unto myself, I have done this thing.

12 Wherefore, go thy way; watch the tree, and nourish it, according to my words.

13 And these will I place in the nethermost part of my vineyard, whithersoever I will, it mattereth not unto thee; and I do it that I may preserve unto myself the natural branches of the tree; and also, that I may lay up fruit thereof against the season, unto myself; for it grieveth me that I should lose this tree and the fruit thereof.

14 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard went his way, and hid the natural branches of the tame olive-tree in the nethermost parts of the vineyard, some in one and some in another, according to his will and pleasure.

15 And it came to pass that a long time passed away, and the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: Come, let us go down into the vineyard, that we may labor in the vineyard.

16 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard, and also the servant, went down into the vineyard to labor. And it came to pass that the servant said unto his mas-

ter: Behold, look here; behold the tree.

17 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard looked and beheld the tree in the which the wild olive branches had been grafted; and it had sprung forth and begun to bear fruit. And he beheld that it was good; and the fruit thereof was like unto the natural fruit.

18 And he said unto the servant: Behold, the branches of the wild tree have taken hold of the moisture of the root thereof, that the root thereof hath brought forth much strength; and because of the much strength of the root thereof the wild branches have brought forth tame fruit. Now, if we had not grafted in these branches, the tree thereof would have perished. And now, behold, I shall lay up much fruit, which the tree thereof hath brought forth; and the fruit thereof I shall lay up against the season, unto mine own self.

19 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: Come, let us go to the nethermost part of the vineyard, and behold if the natural branches of the tree have not brought forth much fruit also, that I may lay up of the fruit thereof against the season, unto mine own self.

20 And it came to pass that they went forth whither the master had hid the natural branches of the tree, and he said unto the servant: Behold these; and he beheld the first that it had brought forth much

fruit; and he beheld also that it was good. And he said unto the servant: Take of the fruit thereof, and lay it up against the season, that I may preserve it unto mine own self; for behold, said he, this long time have I nourished it, and it hath brought forth much fruit.

21 And it came to pass that the servant said unto his master: How comest thou hither to plant this tree, or this branch of the tree? For behold, it was the poorest spot in all the land of thy vineyard.

22 And the Lord of the vineyard said unto him: Counsel me not; I knew that it was a poor spot of ground; wherefore, I said unto thee, I have nourished it this long time, and thou beholdest that it hath brought forth much fruit.

23 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: Look hither; behold I have planted another branch of the tree also; and thou knowest that this spot of ground was poorer than the first. But, behold the tree. I have nourished it this long time, and it hath brought forth much fruit; therefore, gather it, and lay it up against the season, that I may preserve it unto mine own self.

24 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said again unto his servant: Look hither, and behold another branch also, which I have planted; behold that I have nourished it also, and it hath brought forth fruit.

25 And he said unto the servant: Look hither and behold the

last. Behold, this have I planted in a good spot of ground; and I have nourished it this long time, and only a part of the tree hath brought forth tame fruit, and the other part of the tree hath brought forth wild fruit; behold, I have nourished this tree like unto the others.

26 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: Pluck off the branches that have not brought forth good fruit, and cast them into the fire.

27 But behold, the servant said unto him: Let us prune it, and dig about it, and nourish it a little longer, that perhaps it may bring forth good fruit unto thee, that thou canst lay it up against the season.

28 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard and the servant of the Lord of the vineyard did nourish all the fruit of the vineyard.

29 And it came to pass that a long time had passed away, and the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: Come, let us go down into the vineyard, that we may labor again in the vineyard. For behold, the time draweth near, and the end soon cometh; wherefore, I must lay up fruit against the season, unto mine own self.

30 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard and the servant went down into the vineyard; and they came to the tree whose natural branches had been broken off, and the wild branches had

been grafted in; and behold all sorts of fruit did cumber the tree.

31 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard did taste of the fruit, every sort according to its number. And the Lord of the vineyard said: Behold, this long time have we nourished this tree, and I have laid up unto myself against the season much fruit.

32 But behold, this time it hath brought forth much fruit, and there is none of it which is good. And behold, there are all kinds of bad fruit; and it profiteth me nothing, notwithstanding all our labor; and now it grieveth me that I should lose this tree.

33 And the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: What shall we do unto the tree, that I may preserve again good fruit thereof unto mine own self?

34 And the servant said unto his master: Behold, because thou didst graft in the branches of the wild olive-tree they have nourished the roots, that they are alive and they have not perished; wherefore thou beholdest that they are yet good.

35 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: The tree profiteth me nothing, and the roots thereof profit me nothing so long as it shall bring forth evil fruit.

36 Nevertheless, I know that the roots are good, and for mine own purpose I have preserved them; and because of their much strength they have hitherto

brought forth, from the wild branches, good fruit.

37 But behold, the wild branches have grown and have overrun the roots thereof; and because that the wild branches have overcome the roots thereof it hath brought forth much evil fruit; and because that it hath brought forth so much evil fruit thou beholdest that it beginneth to perish; and it will soon become ripened, that it may be cast into the fire, except we should do something for it to preserve it.

38 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: Let us go down into the nethermost parts of the vineyard, and behold if the natural branches have also brought forth evil fruit.

39 And it came to pass that they went down into the nethermost parts of the vineyard. And it came to pass that they beheld that the fruit of the natural branches had become corrupt also; yea, the first and the second and also the last; and they had all become corrupt.

40 And the wild fruit of the last had overcome that part of the tree which brought forth good fruit, even that the branch had withered away and died.

41 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard wept, and said unto the servant: What could I have done more for my vineyard?

42 Behold, I knew that all the fruit of the vineyard, save it were these, had become corrupted. And

now these which have once brought forth good fruit have also become corrupted; and now all the trees of my vineyard are good for nothing save it be to be hewn down and cast into the fire.

43 And behold this last, whose branch hath withered away, I did plant in a good spot of ground; yea, even that which was choice unto me above all other parts of the land of my vineyard.

44 And thou beheldest that I also cut down that which cumbered this spot of ground, that I might plant this tree in the stead thereof.

45 And thou beheldest that a part thereof brought forth good fruit, and a part thereof brought forth wild fruit; and because I plucked not the branches thereof and cast them into the fire, behold, they have overcome the good branch that it hath withered away.

46 And now, behold, notwithstanding all the care which we have taken of my vineyard, the trees thereof have become corrupted, that they bring forth no good fruit; and these I had hoped to preserve, to have laid up fruit thereof against the season, unto mine own self. But, behold, they have become like unto the wild olive-tree, and they are of no worth but to be hewn down and cast into the fire; and it grieveth me that I should lose them.

47 But what could I have done more in my vineyard? Have I slackened mine hand, that I have

not nourished it? Nay, I have nourished it, and I have digged about it, and I have pruned it, and I have dunged it; and I have stretched forth mine hand almost all the day long, and the end draweth nigh. And it grieveth me that I should hew down all the trees of my vineyard, and cast them into the fire that they should be burned. Who is it that has corrupted my vineyard?

48 And it came to pass that the servant said unto his master: Is it not the loftiness of thy vineyard—have not the branches thereof overcome the roots which are good? And because the branches have overcome the roots thereof, behold they grew faster than the strength of the roots, taking strength unto themselves. Behold, I say, is not this the cause that the trees of thy vineyard have become corrupted?

49 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: Let us go to and hew down the trees of the vineyard and cast them into the fire, that they shall not cumber the ground of my vineyard, for I have done all. What could I have done more for my vineyard?

50 But, behold, the servant said unto the Lord of the vineyard: Spare it a little longer.

51 And the Lord said: Yea, I will spare it a little longer, for it grieveth me that I should lose the trees of my vineyard.

52 Wherefore, let us take of the

branches of these which I have planted in the nethermost parts of my vineyard, and let us graft them into the tree from whence they came; and let us pluck from the tree those branches whose fruit is most bitter, and graft in the natural branches of the tree in the stead thereof.

53 And this will I do that the tree may not perish, that, perhaps, I may preserve unto myself the roots thereof for mine own purpose.

54 And, behold, the roots of the natural branches of the tree which I planted whithersoever I would are yet alive; wherefore, that I may preserve them also for mine own purpose, I will take of the branches of this tree, and I will graft them in unto them. Yea, I will graft in unto them the branches of their mother tree, that I may preserve the roots also unto mine own self, that when they shall be sufficiently strong perhaps they may bring forth good fruit unto me, and I may yet have glory in the fruit of my vineyard.

55 And it came to pass that they took from the natural tree which had become wild, and grafted in unto the natural trees, which also had become wild.

56 And they also took of the natural trees which had become wild, and grafted into their mother tree.

57 And the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: Pluck not the wild branches from the trees, save it be those which are

most bitter; and in them ye shall graft according to that which I have said.

58 And we will nourish again the trees of the vineyard, and we will trim up the branches thereof; and we will pluck from the trees those branches which are ripened, that must perish, and cast them into the fire.

59 And this I do that, perhaps, the roots thereof may take strength because of their goodness; and because of the change of the branches, that the good may overcome the evil.

60 And because that I have preserved the natural branches and the roots thereof, and that I have grafted in the natural branches again into their mother tree, and have preserved the roots of their mother tree, that, perhaps, the trees of my vineyard may bring forth again good fruit; and that I may have joy again in the fruit of my vineyard, and, perhaps, that I may rejoice exceedingly that I have preserved the roots and the branches of the first fruit—

61 Wherefore, go to, and call servants, that we may labor diligently with our might in the vineyard, that we may prepare the way, that I may bring forth again the natural fruit, which natural fruit is good and the most precious above all other fruit.

62 Wherefore, let us go to and labor with our might this last time, for behold the end draweth nigh,

and this is for the last time that I shall prune my vineyard.

63 Graft in the branches; begin at the last that they may be first, and that the first may be last, and dig about the trees, both old and young, the first and the last; and the last and the first, that all may be nourished once again for the last time.

64 Wherefore, dig about them, and prune them, and dung them once more, for the last time, for the end draweth nigh. And if it be so that these last grafts shall grow, and bring forth the natural fruit, then shall ye prepare the way for them, that they may grow.

65 And as they begin to grow ye shall clear away the branches which bring forth bitter fruit, according to the strength of the good and the size thereof; and ye shall not clear away the bad thereof all at once, lest the roots thereof should be too strong for the graft, and the graft thereof shall perish, and I lose the trees of my vineyard.

66 For it grieveth me that I should lose the trees of my vineyard; wherefore ye shall clear away the bad according as the good shall grow, that the root and the top may be equal in strength, until the good shall overcome the bad, and the bad be hewn down and cast into the fire, that they cumber not the ground of my vineyard; and thus will I sweep away the bad out of my vineyard.

67 And the branches of the nat-

ural tree will I graft in again into the natural tree;

68 And the branches of the natural tree will I graft into the natural branches of the tree; and thus will I bring them together again, that they shall bring forth the natural fruit, and they shall be one.

69 And the bad shall be cast away, yea, even out of all the land of my vineyard; for behold, only this once will I prune my vineyard.

70 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard sent his servant; and the servant went and did as the Lord had commanded him, and brought other servants; and they were few.

71 And the Lord of the vineyard said unto them: Go to, and labor in the vineyard, with your might. For behold, this is the last time that I shall nourish my vineyard; for the end is nigh at hand, and the season speedily cometh; and if ye labor with your might with me ye shall have joy in the fruit which I shall lay up unto myself against the time which will soon come.

72 And it came to pass that the servants did go and labor with their mights; and the Lord of the vineyard labored also with them; and they did obey the commandments of the Lord of the vineyard in all things.

73 And there began to be the natural fruit again in the vineyard; and the natural branches began to grow and thrive exceedingly; and the wild branches began to be

plucked off and to be cast away; and they did keep the root and the top thereof equal, according to the strength thereof.

74 And thus they labored, with all diligence, according to the commandments of the Lord of the vineyard, even until the bad had been cast away out of the vineyard, and the Lord had preserved unto himself that the trees had become again the natural fruit; and they became like unto one body; and the fruits were equal; and the Lord of the vineyard had preserved unto himself the natural fruit, which was most precious unto him from the beginning.

75 And it came to pass that when the Lord of the vineyard saw that his fruit was good, and that his vineyard was no more corrupt, he called up his servants, and said unto them: Behold, for this last time have we nourished my vineyard; and thou beholdest that I have done according to my will; and I have preserved the natural fruit, that it is good, even like as it was in the beginning. And blessed art thou; for because ye have been

diligent in laboring with me in my vineyard, and have kept my commandments, and have brought unto me again the natural fruit, that my vineyard is no more corrupted, and the bad is cast away, behold ye shall have joy with me because of the fruit of my vineyard.

76 For behold, for a long time will I lay up of the fruit of my vineyard unto mine own self against the season, which speedily cometh; and for the last time have I nourished my vineyard, and pruned it, and dug about it, and dunged it; wherefore I will lay up unto mine own self of the fruit, for a long time, according to that which I have spoken.

77 And when the time cometh that evil fruit shall again come into my vineyard, then will I cause the good and the bad to be gathered; and the good will I preserve unto myself, and the bad will I cast away into its own place. And then cometh the season and the end; and my vineyard will I cause to be burned with fire.

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Jonathan K. Driggs, J.D., is an investigator with the anti-discrimination division of the Industrial Commission of Utah.

John Gee, M.A., is pursuing a Ph.D. in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Yale University.

Daniel J. Fairbanks, Ph.D., is assistant professor of Botany and Range Science at Brigham Young University.

James E. Faulconer, Ph.D., is associate professor of Philosophy at Brigham Young University.

Gary P. Gillum, M.L.S., is Ancient Studies and Religion librarian at Brigham Young University.

John Franklin Hall, Ph.D., is associate professor of Humanities, Classics, and Comparative Literature at Brigham Young University.

Wilford M. Hess, Ph.D., is professor of Botany and Range Science at Brigham Young University.

Paul Y. Hoskisson, Ph.D., is associate professor of Ancient Scripture at Brigham Young University.

Arthur Henry King, Ph.D., is professor emeritus of English at Brigham Young University.

Truman G. Madsen, Ph.D., is professor of Philosophy at Brigham Young University.

Donald W. Parry, Ph.D., is visiting assistant professor of Hebrew at Brigham Young University.

Daniel C. Peterson, Ph.D., is assistant professor of Islamic Studies and Arabic at Brigham Young University.

Noel B. Reynolds, Ph.D., is professor of Political Science at Brigham Young University.

Stephen D. Ricks, Ph.D., is professor of Hebrew and Semitic Languages and associate dean of General and Honors Education at Brigham Young University.

David Rolph Seely, Ph.D., is assistant professor of Ancient Scripture at Brigham Young University.

Royal Skousen, Ph.D., is professor of English at Brigham Young University.

M. Catherine Thomas, Ph.D., is an instructor in Ancient Scripture at Brigham Young University.

John A. Tvedtnes, M.A., is a technical writer for GTE Health Systems. He has studied extensively at Hebrew University in Jerusalem and has taught at the University of Utah, Brigham Young University–Salt Lake City, and the Brigham Young University Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies.

Grant Underwood, Ph.D., is associate professor of Religion at Brigham Young University–Hawaii.

John W. Welch, J.D., is professor of Law at Brigham Young University and editor of *Brigham Young University Studies*.

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